



Number Fourteen.

KITTY GRAFTON.

ARGENT

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TO THE READER.

AMONG the most favorable notices, which have been so kindly bestowed upon the *Temperance Tales*, there have been occasional strictures upon the exhibition of deacons, church-members, and clergymen, in an unfavorable light. The story now offered to the world, may be read without disquietude, by those, who are sensitive upon this point. A respectful regard for the opinions of others has prompted the writer to offer a plain exposition of his own.

If, in these humble efforts to promote the welfare of mankind, *the holy office* of pastor and its correlative *offices* of deacon and church-member had *any where*, on *any page*, been otherwise approached than with affectionate respect, there would assuredly have been good ground of offence. But it has been far otherwise. Not only have these *offices*, as such, been presented in the most respectful point of view, but examples can readily be found, over the length and breadth of the *Temperance Tales*, of individual deacons, church-members, and clergymen, of the most pious and exemplary lives and conversations.

The stricture must therefore be considered, as limited to the occasional introduction of an anti-temperance minister, a rum-selling deacon, or a drunken church-member. Three questions naturally arise in this connection, which the writer proposes to ask, and, so far as he is able, to answer.

FIRST: Have such things ever existed, as anti-temperance ministers, rum-selling deacons, and drunken church-members?

SECOND: Do such things still exist, notwithstanding the extensive spread of the temperance reform, and the prayers and entreaties of its friends?

THIRD: If such things exist, does their exposure tend to retard the progress of the temperance cause, or to bring the *offices* of religion into contempt?

To the aged, whose memories are yet vigorous, it may seem a work of supererogation to construct a formal reply to our first inquiry. Before the dawn of the reformation, rum-selling, not on account of its respectability, but of the dangers attending it, was intrusted to grave men,—to men *of sober lives and conversations, and who were firmly attached to the constitution and laws*. Such has been the very phraseology of the law, through all

our colonial, provincial, and state legislation. The deacons in every village were men of this description ; and the finger of the statute seemed to point towards them and church-members, in a very intelligible manner. Accordingly a large proportion of such persons, in the ratio of their whole number, were engaged in the traffic, from the very commencement of our national existence.* Had the trade in the means of drunkenness been a safe one for the consumer, the restrictive language of the law would not have been employed. It would have been needless. And, had the traffic been confided to ordinary hands, it is reasonable to infer, that there would have been fewer intemperate clergymen. For they would not have been so likely to purchase their intoxicating liquor of a purely secular dealer, as of a deacon or a church-member. It is not to be denied, that the holy office of a deacon and the solemn profession of a church-member contributed to clothe with an air of respectability that very traffic, which, now that it has been thoroughly stripped and publicly exposed, so many good, and wise, and pious men

* NOTE. A grave and highly respected friend, to whom these remarks were read in manuscript, states that, in his native village, where a venerable deacon had long been engaged in the retail rum trade, two taverns were established, in process of time, whose proprietors, though not at all remarkable for the sanctity of their lives, soon acquired from their customers the appellation of *deacons*.

hold to be disreputable, and even immoral. It seemed to be a safe and consistent doctrine, that a clergyman might becomingly purchase and employ any article, which a deacon or a church-member, in good standing, would openly expose for sale, having been licensed for that very purpose by authority. Certain it is, that intemperate clergymen were not at all uncommon. Those, to whom this assertion may appear too broad, we refer to "Barbour's Temperance Tables," showing the influence of intemperance on the churches, and to the candid statements of all persons, whose years enable them to speak from experience. Nothing can be more pertinent here, than a few extracts from a late letter to the Rev. Dr. Edwards, from the Rev. Leonard Woods, D. D. Professor of Christian Theology, in the Theological Institution, Andover, Massachusetts.*

"When I entered on the work of the ministry (thirty-eight years ago) it was the general and almost universal practice for ministers to make a frequent use of stimulating drinks, especially on the Sabbath. They considered this practice an important means of promoting their health, sustaining them under fatigue, and increasing the vigor of their constitution. The generality of physicians approved of this practice, and often recommended brandy, wine, gin, etc., as the best remedy for diseases

* Ninth Rep. Amer. Temp. Soc. p. 49

of the stomach and lungs. Every family that I visited, deemed it an act of kindness, and no more than what common civility required, to offer me wine, or distilled spirit, and thought it a little strange, if I refused to drink. At funerals, the bereaved friends and others were accustomed to use strong drink before and after going to the burial. At ordinations, councils, and all other meetings of ministers, different kinds of stimulating drinks were provided, and there were but few who did not partake of them." * * *

* * * * * *"The state of things which I have referred to, among men of my own profession, together with its manifest consequences, began, early in my ministry, to alarm my fears. I remember that at a particular period, before the temperance reformation commenced, I was able to count up nearly forty ministers of the Gospel, and none of them at a very great distance, who were either drunkards, or so far addicted to intemperate drinking, that their reputation and usefulness were greatly injured, if not utterly ruined. And I could mention an ordination, that took place about twenty years ago, at which, I, myself, was ashamed and grieved to see two aged ministers literally drunk; and a third, indecently excited with strong drink. These disgusting and appalling facts I should wish might be concealed. But they were made public by the guilty persons; and I have thought it just and proper to mention them, in order to show how much we owe to a compassionate God for the great deliver-*

ance he has wrought." This evidence might be continued to any desirable extent.

In the second place, we ask, if there are such things, at the present day, as anti-temperance ministers, rum-selling deacons, and drunken church-members? The reformation has done much to purify the world in this respect. In the language of the Rev. Dr. Woods, "*We owe much to a compassionate God, for the great deliverance he has wrought.*" And yet, even at the present day, this deliverance, though an object of devout thanksgiving and praise, is by no means complete. The testimony, in the writer's possession, furnished from various quarters of our country, affords melancholy proof, that deacons and church-members have by no means relinquished the use nor the traffic; and that clergymen may be found in every denomination, who set their faces, in a bitter spirit, against this "*great deliverance,*" for which, with Professor Woods, such multitudes arise to offer their grateful homage to a compassionate God. At one moment, we have "*reasons for not joining the temperance society, by a clergyman.*" At another, a minister boasts before his people, in the very spirit of exultation, that he and they have not formed themselves "*into a Bible society, or a temperance, or an education, or a benevolent society.*" To-day, a bishop lectures against the temperance society, and pub

lishes his lecture to the world, assuring them upon the faith of his lawn sleeves, that "*the success of the temperance society will be the triumph of infidelity.*" We are scarcely permitted to recover from one false alarm, before our nerves are exercised by another : a *reverend* reviewer next proclaims the true "*state of the temperance reform,*" and informs us, that the cause is "*at a stand ;*" while, in the same breath, he calls upon his brethren and friends, to "*drag the wheels*"—of a machine, which he has already averred to be perfectly motionless and still. Nor is this all ; another *reverend divine*, who has been "*every thing by fits and nothing long,*" turns round upon his old confederates, and opposes those very doctrines, which had been the object of his zealous affection, and puts forth a long tirade against the temperance society, and all the grand moral and religious combinations of the age ; assuring us that the temperance society, in particular, is utterly defunct ; and referring the world, for a succedaneum, an infallible panacea for all moral maladies, to the book of common prayer and the doctrines of the primitive church. Over this production, the editor of a religious paper, himself also a *clergyman*, and who, could he have grasped the sword of St. Peter, would have certainly cut the rest of mankind to his own stature,—literally gloats, pouring forth, at the same time, the most vituperative language against

the temperance society and its supporters. Nor is this all ; when the Massachusetts State Temperance Society, upon a late occasion, requested the clergy to preach upon the subject of temperance, *a clergyman*, not contented with a contemptuous neglect of that society's request, entertained his hearers with an anti-temperance discourse, diligently arraying before them every text, which could be misconstrued to afford comfort to the wine-bibber. Nevertheless the temperance reform moves gloriously forward—these efforts of its opponents are speedily forgotten ;—in the language of another,

Lethæan gulfs receive them, as they fall,
And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.

It is abundantly manifest, however, that the temperance reform has not had its perfect work among *clergymen, deacons, and church-members*. The writer has before him incontrovertible evidence of the intemperance of several *clergymen, deacons, and church-members* ; in some cases amounting to stupid drunkenness. Within a short time, *a minister*, somewhat advanced in years, a member of the temperance society, was found to be in the constant practice of privately drinking gin, and was summoned before the society for that offence. *Deacons and church-members* are notoriously engaged in the traffic and in the manufacture, not only by wholesale, but, in the more dis-

gusting form, retailing it to every applicant. In making this statement, the writer relies on the evidence of conversations, held directly with men of this description, upon the subject of their degrading traffic. It is not long, since he partook of the sacrament, while the tavern-keeper of the village, sitting in the same pew, did the same thing; and, in less than half an hour, the writer having returned to the inn, saw this *church-member* openly selling brandy in his bar, and drinking it himself without the slightest indication of embarrassment. The testimony on this point also could be gathered in abundance throughout the land.

We now, in the third place, inquire if the exposure of such examples has a tendency to retard the progress of the temperance reform, or to bring the *offices* of religion into contempt? It must be apparent, that the great body of rum-sellers delight to shelter themselves behind this vanguard of deacons and church-members, their sanctimonious co-ordinates in this melancholy traffic. It is, at present, believed to be as reputable for the consumer to buy, as for the deacon and church-member to sell: here again the holy office and the Christian profession, in their misapplication, exert a baneful influence upon the morals of a people, and certainly tend to retard the progress of the reform. It will be difficult to convince the inhab-

itants of a city or village of the immorality of the traffic, while a deacon or church-member therein openly pursues it, and yet maintains, unimpaired, his relations to society and to the church. Wherever such a condition of things exists, it is worse than absurd to marvel that the temperance cause is at a stand, or even losing the ground it had already won. Its very worst opponents, in such cases, are those, who, by precept and example, should prove themselves its warmest friends. Experience has shown, that reason, however effectual, with impartial minds, is of but little avail, when self-interest argues upon the other side. Never was this remark more applicable, than to *rum-selling deacons and church-members*. They are more readily influenced by pathos than by reason—too frequently they are unmoved by either. There is a last, and, as the writer believes, a legitimate resource ;

Ridiculum acri
Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res.*

It is not easy to perceive, in what manner the whole body of deacons, or church-members, or clergymen is to receive detriment from such an exhibition of their inconsistent and worthless associates, until we can comprehend the nature and extent of that mischief, which is wrought upon

* For ridicule shall frequently prevail,
And cut the knot, when graver reasons fail.—FRANCIS.

the natural body, by the extirpation of an ulcer or a cancer, or by the removal of a corrupt and offensive member. Reason, or pathos, or ridicule, in the former case, may, by the blessing of the Lord, produce the same beneficial results, which are achieved, in the latter, by the knife, or the caustic, or the actual cautery. Neither can it be readily perceived, that the rule of righteousness requires of all the deacons in the land to cast their Christian graces into common stock, and then declare a dividend *per capita*, among them all. Still further,—should the friends of temperance expand that mantle, which is said to hide a multitude of sins, sufficiently to cover all the distilleries, taverns, and dram-shops, owned or controlled, directly and indirectly, by deacons and church-members, throughout these United States,—it would be of no possible avail; for the enemies of temperance would assuredly tear it away. The very forbearance, in relation to such offending members, would indicate the point of morbid sensibility, which the foes of the reformation would not fail to perceive.

But the irreligious, the scoffer will delight to witness these exhibitions of intemperate clergymen, and rum-selling deacons, and church-members! The scoffer would indeed have reason to smile, if the wearer's bands, or lawn sleeves, or the office of deacon, or the profession of a church-

member were accounted by Christians, not simply a *prima facie* but an indelible and unquestionable stamp of sanctity forever.

The *offices* of the church are not more likely to come into disrepute, at the present time, by an intimation that drunkenness may be found among the professors of Christianity, than was the profession of Christianity itself, when an inspired apostle rebuked the drunkenness of the primitive disciples around the table of their Lord. But these *offices* may well be considered of doubtful dignity, whenever the concealment of corruption shall be deemed essential to their well-being.

It is desirable to show, that there is no other absolute security from the evils of intemperance, than in the whole armor of a cold-water man. It is not possible more forcibly to exhibit this truth, which such multitudes appear unwilling to believe, than by exhibiting, in a striking light, the insufficiency even of the offices and professions of religion to protect those teachers and disciples of Christianity, who, while they pray not to be led into temptation, obviously prefer the path of danger to that of safety.

KITTY GRAFTON.

My ministerial labors commenced in the village of Heathermead, about nine years ago : and, in these times, when a love of change appears to be almost epidemical among ministers and people, it may seem somewhat remarkable, that I still preach where my pastoral life began, to many willing ears, and, I trust, through God's mercy, to some sanctified hearts.

I was first called to the ministry as the colleague of a very aged man, the Rev. Adrian More. He was my father,—not after the flesh,—my own natural father I never beheld ; he perished at sea, a few months only before I was born.—This aged minister was my father in the Lord. I was placed under

his care, to be prepared for the university; and the good old man prepared me, I trust, for the faithful service of the best of masters. When I quitted the university, I was instructed for the ministry under his direction; and, subsequently, at his own request, I became associated with him in his holy office. This venerable man, at the age of eighty years, gave me the charge upon my ordination; and my first public discourse, on the ensuing Sabbath, was a sermon over his lifeless remains. He was ripe for the sickle, and longed to be gathered in. The energies of a good constitution and the grace of God had sustained him for six and fifty years, in the performance of his sacred trust; and when, in God's good time, his spiritual guard was relieved, by the institution of another at his side; this faithful old soldier of the cross laid down his armor of the present world, and went to that rest, appointed for the dead, who die in the Lord.

During the period of my pupilage, we had many pleasant rambles together, and I never failed to gather some useful instruction by the

way ; for his conscientious impressions of duty, as my instructor, forbade him to be satisfied with affording me the mere technicalities of education ; and our conversation, at such times, was eminently useful, in the improvement of my reasoning and colloquial powers.

Upon one occasion, we had strolled almost to the confines of the next village ; in which it was a matter of painful notoriety, that the clergyman consulted his own comfort, rather than the spiritual wants of his parishioners : “ Let us turn,” said my old master,—with a smile upon his benignant features, in which the slight touch of pleasantry, that first arose, was speedily chased away by an expression of sadness ;—“ let us turn,” said he ; “ let us not press farther upon our brother’s domains, lest we be suspected of coming to see the nakedness of the land.”—Upon the very borders of the adjoining village, though within the limits of our own, there stood an ancient cottage, of peculiar structure, with its multiplied gables, and its second story projecting over the first. From its broken windows and doors,

I supposed it to have been abandoned. It is yet standing, and is the very last cottage, as you leave Heathermead, on the north. In the rear of this building, there were, at that time, the remains of an uncommonly large barn; the timbers and roof were then in existence, but the boards and the lower part of the interior had been removed. As we drew near, a female came forth, and stood, without any apparent motive, looking steadily towards us, as we passed.—“I did not think it was inhabited,” said I.—“It is not,” replied my old master, “excepting by that lone woman.”—As we drew nigh, I had an opportunity of observing the solitary occupant more closely. Her person was tall and thin; her eye, sunken and haggard; and her hair, which was wholly uncovered, and quite gray, bore no evidence of personal attention. The expression of her countenance was decidedly bitter and malevolent. When we came in front of the cottage—“Good morning, Mrs. Grafton,” said my old master. The effect of his salutation would have been as perceptible

upon the features of a statue. She stood perfectly still, gazing upon us with unabated severity, and in perfect silence.—“I will try once more,” said he, aside.—“I hear excellent accounts of your children, Mrs. Grafton.”—“Umph!—the poor-house!”—she replied, with a sneering expression, and walked back into the cottage, without uttering another word.—“It is in vain,” said he, as we walked slowly away; “this unhappy woman is utterly impracticable; I can do nothing with her, though I have made many and various attempts, for several years.”—“Is she crazy, sir?” I inquired.—“There are some persons who think so, but I do not,” he replied. “Here she has lived all her days. That cottage was built by her father; she was born there; her parents died there; there she was married; and there she gave birth to five children; and she is resolved to die there. No—she is not crazy—she is *desperate*. Her case is one of the most extraordinary that I have ever known. The story is too long to be told during our walk home; but, if I have

no particular engagement this evening, I will relate it to you."

My old master had scarcely returned thanks after our evening repast, and seated himself in his arm-chair, when I drew near, and looked up in his face with an expression which he readily understood.—"Well, my child," said he, "you shall not be disappointed of your story, though it may cost me some pain in the relation."—"How old was that woman, sir," said I, "whom we saw this morning at the cottage door?"—"I cannot tell you precisely," he replied, "without a recurrence to my records; she is well advanced in years, though somewhat younger than you would be led to suppose from her appearance. Harrowing care and bitter disappointment will sometimes lay hold of time's checkered signet, and suddenly fix the impression of old age, as effectually, as though it were done by the more dilatory process of time itself. But I will tell you the story from the beginning.—Very many years ago, there came to this village a man, whose name was Gotlieb Jansen: he brought

with him his wife. They were of that class of persons, who have been called redemptioners. They came to this country from a village on the borders of the Rhine. They were extremely poor, and embarked with an understanding, that, when they arrived in America, they should voluntarily bind themselves to servitude, for the advantage of the ship-owner, until their passage-money should be paid. They arrived at the port of Philadelphia; where, at the present day, there are some opulent and fashionable families, who have good sense enough to trace, with pleasure, their origin to those redemptioners of Germany, who brought nothing hither from their native shores, but honest hearts and willing hands. Gotlieb Jansen and his wife, upon their arrival, were young, healthy, industrious, frugal, and strictly temperate. He was an expert gardener, and well skilled in agriculture, in all its departments. In the metropolis of Pennsylvania he soon found employment for his talent in horticulture. As wages were proportioned to experience and skill,

Jansen's compensation, and the perquisites and privileges of the garden and green-house of a private gentleman, in whose service he labored, soon procured him the means of redeeming himself and his young wife from their voluntary bondage. He continued to labor in his vocation, with uninterrupted health and indefatigable industry, for seven years. His employer was a member of the society of Friends, of whom Jansen never spoke but with affectionate respect. At the end of this term, his earnings, which had been judiciously invested, under the counsel of his Quaker friend, amounted to no inconsiderable sum. He was desirous of trying the virtue of his faithful share and pruning-hook upon acres and orchards of his own. He has often told me how much he suffered, when he came to break the matter to his kind master. The Quaker paused for some moments; and at length observed, that he owned a tract of fair land in that part of the village of Heathermead, which is called Heathermead End; that he might go and look at it; and, if he liked it,

he should have a deed of it for a certain sum. Jansen lost no time in making a journey to Heathermead, and examining the land, which was manifestly of an excellent quality. He discovered, however, that the tract could readily be sold, for a greater sum, to the farmers of Heathermead, who best knew its value. Here, as he failed not to perceive, was an admirable chance to cheat the old Quaker; but double-dealing was not one of the secrets, by which Gotlieb Jansen's prosperity had arisen. He faithfully represented the matter to his master:—'Thee likest the tract?' said the Quaker.—'It is as fine land as I ever saw,' said Jansen, 'and I am greatly pleased with it.'—'Thee hast served me seven years,' rejoined the Quaker, 'and thee hast pleased me right well. I well know the value of that land, but thee shalt have a deed for the sum I said unto thee.'—I have seen Gotlieb Jansen shed tears of gratitude, as he described his separation from his old Quaker master, when, with an affectionate pressure of the hand, and 'Fare thee well, friend Jansen,' he put into

his hands the deed of this valuable tract, for not more than three fourths of its real value.

“ Gotlieb Jansen’s first care was to erect upon his land the house and barn, the remains of which we passed this morning. The peculiar structure of the one, and the unusually large dimensions of the other were subjects of much conversation in the village ; and, if all the strictures, which were made upon Jansen’s proceedings at the time, had been collected together, we should have quite a volume of commentaries. The general impression, for a while, ran decidedly against him, as a whimsical fellow. At a short distance from his dwelling, he had erected, rather for pleasure than profit, a little conservatory for plants. At that time, probably, not an inhabitant of Heathermead had ever beheld a green-house ; and the good people of the village were exceedingly perplexed in relation to the proprietor’s design ; but, as Gotlieb, while his buildings were in progress, was busily engaged in planting an extensive orchard, the farmers’ wives were almost unanimously of opinion,

that the new structure was designed for drying apples. They were not a little disposed to laugh in their sleeves at poor Gotlieb, for erecting such a building, so long before he could possibly expect to gather apples from his young trees. The farmers themselves were not altogether without good cause, as they esteemed it, for a little chuckling, at Jansen's expense. Underneath every apple-tree, as he set it in the ground, he had placed a large flat stone, which, they pleasantly observed, was not likely to afford much nourishment. This was a German custom, designed to prevent the roots from tapping, or striking downward, and to compel them to take their course along the upper and richer soil.

"Gotlieb Jansen was a man of few words. Those precious hours, which so many disinterested people devote to the affairs of others, this honest German bestowed upon his own: he labored on, contented with the proverb, which bids those laugh, who win. Matters soon however began to wear a very different appearance. His intercourse with the peo-

ple of Heathermead speedily established his reputation, as an obliging, good-natured man ; he seemed not desirous of wrapping himself, or his affairs, in unusual mystery ; and the farmers' wives were particularly inclined to think well of Gotlieb Jansen, when he expounded the riddle of the green-house, by telling them, that it was meant as a plaything for his '*good woman*,' who was extremely fond of cultivating flowers. In a few years, his agricultural success had thoroughly established his reputation, as an excellent husbandman ; and Jansen's farm became not less an object of attraction to the farmers of the village, than his green-house and flower-garden to their wives and daughters. He had readily assimilated and become one of the people ; and was universally beloved and respected. About a year after his arrival in this village, his wife gave birth to a daughter. Gotlieb and his wife, in the progress of time, became members of our church, and they were pious Christians. Their daughter, Christiana, grew up an uncommonly beautiful young woman.

She was their only child ; and, if the parents were particularly censurable for any fault, it was for their doting partiality towards this interesting girl. They were more than willing to gratify her, in all her desires. Her spirit was high, and her temper extremely quick ; but her heart was full of generosity, and her disposition, towards those she loved, was amiable and kind. She inherited the partiality of her parents for the cultivation of flowers ; and the garden and the little greenhouse were her chief delights. Her features were characteristic, in no very remarkable degree however, of her foreign origin ; but, at the age of eighteen, she was singularly attractive. Kitty Jansen was, at that time, deservedly styled the beauty of Heathermead End. Her surpassing comeliness was universally acknowledged, in our parish, with a single exception. There was a Miss Pamela Mickle, who had herself been handsome in her day, but was then in her wane, who solemnly protested, that she never could see it. After the description, which I have given

you of Kitty Jansen," continued my old master, "you will scarcely be able to trace a vestige of that lovely girl, in the miserable creature, that gazed upon us, as we passed the cottage. But it is even so. That was Kitty Jansen. That desolate wilderness was the same, which my poor friend Gotlieb once made to blossom like the rose. That abandoned dwelling was then the habitation of joy, and love, and peace, and prayer. In all my parish,—and my parishioners love me above my deserts,—I have no where been more kindly greeted than in that cottage. Whenever I came, and however they were occupied, all things were gladly sacrificed for the sake of a little conversation with their pastor. Gotlieb would leave his plough in the furrow, and the good wife would hasten from her dairy ; and even Kitty, though she never seemed to rely upon the only sure foundation, like her parents, would not suffer me to depart, without an offering of her choicest fruit, or a bunch of her finest flowers. By the aid of a mischievous memory, it is

all before me, for an instant—and now again it is gone. What a curse has fallen upon poor Gotlieb's little Eden!—The simoom could not have wrought the work of destruction more effectually.

“There was living in Heathermead, when Kitty Jansen was about eighteen years of age, a young man, a farmer's son, whose name was Ethan Grafton. He was a very capable and industrious young man. While his father cultivated a small hired farm, adjoining Jansen's, Ethan availed himself of his proximity, and cultivated the affections of the old man's daughter; and it soon began to be whispered about, that young Ethan's crop would be worth more than his father's, should they be successful in getting in their respective harvests. Pamela Mickle said it never would be a match in the world; and, after that, the most incredulous began to believe it. The popular prophecy was correct; and, in less than two years, Ethan Grafton wedded the beauty of Heathermead End; upon which memorable occasion, poor Pamela Mickle

laughed herself into a violent fit of hysterics. It was thought to be an excellent match. I certainly thought so myself," said my old master. "Grafton was apparently an amiable man, and wonderfully popular in our village. He was active, and intelligent in his business ; and, under the instruction of such a teacher as Jansen, it was augured that he would, in time, become the most accomplished farmer in the county.

"Old Gotlieb and his wife had stipulated, that their only child should not leave them in their old age ; so Ethan married on, as we say, when a woman takes a husband, rather than a man a wife. For years, the happiness of this family appeared to be as complete, as any earthly thing can be. How often," continued my old master, "have I seen Gotlieb, of a summer evening, sitting on the green before his cottage door, with the good book open upon his knees, and surrounded by his little grandchildren !—He was an even-tempered old man, and his whole life was free from every appearance of ostentation. It is

true, when his old friend and patron, the Quaker, came to visit him, as he did, once at least in every year, there was commonly, for a few days before his arrival, no little bustle and preparation, in the cottage at Heathermead End. The Quaker was a noble-looking old gentleman, arrayed in a suit of the finest broadcloth, cut, to be sure, according to the fashion of the society of Friends, and of course without cape or supernumerary button. I never shall forget the magnificent pair of horses that he drove. They cost him, as Gotlieb said, one thousand dollars. I once asked old Jansen, what induced him to make such a parade for his Quaker friend, particularly in the culinary part of his arrangements. 'Vy,' said Gotlieb, 'de old gentleman ish von of de kindest and pest men in de voorld, and he ish temperate in his eating and drinking, but he like de roast duck vary vell, and he know ven he ish done to a turn.'

"Gotlieb and Theresa Jansen, his wife, were stricken in years. There was nothing like morbid sensibility in the attachment of this

couple, yet they were devoted to each other. They appeared to be governed by a sober conviction, that two heads and two hearts are better than one, when their efforts and their energies are concentrated, for the creation of a joint stock of domestic happiness. They were reasonable people, and understood aright the process, which God employs to wean his children from the present world ; they read volumes of wisdom in the storm and tempest, and found a meaning in the flickering cloud, as it takes somewhat from the splendor of the brightest mid-day ; they submitted with the confidence of devoted children to the discipline of their teacher ; and, when age and its wearisome retinue of cares and infirmities were at hand, they were not compelled to make a hasty preparation for heaven. The tyrant and the usurper have occasionally worn their armor beneath their robes of state, in the spirit of fear : in another spirit, old Gotlieb and his worthy partner, however occupied, whether in their Sabbath clothes or working apparel, by day or by night, had

worn their armor of righteousness upon the right hand and upon the left.—The old man had grown too infirm for the labors of the field, but I have seen him,” said my old master, “of a spring morning, sitting upon the green bank, and looking down upon his goodly acres, with two or three of his grandchildren about him, while Ethan Grafton, his son-in-law, held the plough, and his oldest boy Elkanah, who was not over seven, rode the mare. No war-horse was ever fonder of the fields of his youth than old Gotlieb; nor did the former ever turn his ear to the trumpet, more eagerly than this old man to the first full drops of pattering rain, as they fell, after a long interval of drought, upon the parching ground.

“One fine morning in May, old Gotlieb walked forth with little Elkanah, to whom he was particularly attached, taking his pocket Bible, as was his constant practice, to read upon the way. The old man used to say, that he loved most to worship God in the fields, where he could have a full view of the

works of his hands, and where he could gaze upward, without any thing of human creation, to obstruct his view. He returned much earlier than was his custom. Little Elkanah came first into the house, and brought the tidings, that his grandfather had been very faint.—The good old wife received him at the door. He sat down in the stoop before the cottage ; and, as he gave her—it had been his custom for many years—the first branch that he could find of the dogwood in full flower,—‘Dat ish de last,’ said he with a faint smile. Old Theresa turned away, for an instant, to conceal her emotion. As she came back to him with a glass of water, ‘Gotlieb,’ said she, ‘Kitty says the new rose, in the green-house, that you wished to see flower, is just coming out. The garden looks finely, this morning ; and, when you feel stronger, you and I will go and walk in it, Gotlieb.’—The old man shook his head, as he placed both hands upon his heart.—‘They sent for me,’ continued my old master. ‘He was very low, when I arrived ; and the

physician, who had been previously summoned, proclaimed his end to be near. He said little. 'She tells me,' said he, pointing to his wife, 'that we shall walk in the garden together: so we shall, but it will be in the garden of Eden.'—After he had lost the power of speech, he drew Elkanah towards him, and put into the child's bosom the little pocket Bible, which had been the companion of their rambles.

"In two days after, this good old man yielded up his spirit. For many years, Theresa had cherished a strong hope, that they might be permitted to commence their heavenly walk together. This hope had operated upon her mind with such force, as to produce something like a belief, that it would be so. What there may be of philosophy in such matters—how far the force of a powerful and long-cherished presentiment may physically operate in the production of such results, I pretend not to comprehend. I have nothing to do, but with the fact. Good old Theresa performed the last offices of love; she closed

those eyes, that had never looked upon her but with affection.—The next morning she rose not as usual. When her daughter entered her chamber, her features were so perfectly composed, that, at first, she seemed to be in peaceful slumber:—it was not thus—the corruptible was there, but the spirit had fled. During the still watches of the night, it had quitted its tabernacle, and already commenced its passage with that of her husband to the garden of Eden, for a closer walk with her Savior and her God. Their bodies were buried in the same grave.”

When my old master had arrived at this point, he drew a heavy sigh. “Ah,” said he, “it would be refreshing to rest here, but truth, however painful in its progress, presses us forward.—After the death of the old people, Ethan Grafton and his wife continued, for some time, to live happily together. Excepting in the ordinary allotments of Providence, it would have been a very difficult matter for a common observer, to have anticipated the cause, which should annihilate their happi-

ness, or even deprive them of any material part of it. Old Gotlieb had such unbounded confidence in the wisdom of his son-in-law, and in his affection for his daughter, that he gave him his entire property by will.—When the old man planted an orchard, he probably no more imagined, that he was laying the foundation of the temple of discord, within the precincts of his peaceful cottage, than Noah supposed, when he planted a vineyard, that, by an abuse of its products, he should bring down the curse upon Canaan. But it fell out, in the course of time, that, as the patriarch drank of the wine and was drunken, so Ethan Grafton's incomparable cider and perry were found abundantly capable of producing the same mischievous result. Gotlieb Jansen's orchard had long been an object of universal remark. The old man had spared no pains, in its culture and preservation. In the words of Bayley McGrudy, the Scotch schoolmaster, who taught the school in Heathermead, when displaying his library of two hundred and forty volumes,—‘ There wa

nothing like it in all Heathermead.' Ethan, as I have said, was a popular, and, of course, a very hospitable man. The quantity of cider, which he annually manufactured, was enormous, and its quality so very superior, as to insure a ready and extensive market. The liberality of old Gotlieb had made his son-in-law the sovereign master of many broad acres, a capital homestead, an excellent stock, and some ready money. When a young man, somewhat abruptly, steps into an estate, so entirely transcending his primitive aspirations, he is commonly liable to an *épanchement du cœur*, an opening of the heart. No sooner was the legitimate period of mourning at an end, than Ethan Grafton began to invite his friends to come and see him. And, long before, there were not a few, who used to say, 'The Graftons must be very lonely ; let us go and sit an hour or so with Ethan, and taste his cider.' It must not be supposed, that Ethan Grafton's cider was such miserable, vapid trash as is occasionally met with, upon the dinner tables of country taverns, whose

employment sets the teeth on edge, and brings tears into the eyes, and deprives the human countenance, for the time, of all its rational proportions. There was no more resemblance than between the waters of Helicon and those of a washtub, or between nectar and the very smallest of small beer. Ethan Grafton's far-famed cider, like the wine, so fatally administered by Ulysses to the Cyclop, was truly

‘Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine.’

He had a prodigious amount of cider and perry in bottles, of different years, marked and numbered, and arranged with the greatest care, on their respective shelves, in his cellar. When he entertained his friends, and despatched little Elkanah for some particular bottle, it was impossible to shut out the comparison, if it be lawful ‘*parvis componere magna*,’ between the young farmer of Heathermead End, and some metropolitan entertainer, with his steward of the wine-cellar at his elbow, book in hand, ready, at a word, to

proceed to any specified compartment, section, and range of the subterraneous treasure-house, and select the identical bottle, which the master requires.

“Certain it was, as Bayley McGrudy used shrewdly to remark, that, when the tears ceased to flow at Heathermead End, the cider began. Ethan used to boast that he had cider in his cellar, that was ‘*full as good as any wine.*’ Whether its effects were evidences of its goodness or badness, it became matter of demonstration, within a couple of years after old Gotlieb’s death, that it would produce drunkenness about as soon ; and that drunkenness, so produced, would as readily steal away the brains, and sour the temper, and blunt the kindlier affections of the heart. Ethan’s cider was certainly very much like Noah’s wine in its operation and effects. It soon began to manifest, in its influences, the truth of his assertion, that it was *quite equal to wine* ; and, as the first domestic quarrel, after the flood, and the curse of Canaan were the almost immediate consequences of drunkenness on wine,

so the first harsh treatment, which Gotlieb's grandchildren received from their father, was a severe kick, bestowed upon little Elkanah, for selecting the wrong bottle of cider, while his father was endeavoring to prove to some young associates, the correctness of his frequently-repeated assertion, that his cider was *equal to wine*. Poor Elkanah, who had become weary of his repeated embassies to the cellar, and was somewhat sleepy withal, had mistaken the direction, and produced a stale bottle from a range, which had proved worthless; and, when Ethan, who was waiting for the applause of his guests, whose glasses he had filled, found himself repaid with shouts of laughter, and perceived the cause, he could not restrain his anger, highly excited as he was already, by the cider he had drunken. He dealt the poor child a terrible kick with his cowhide boot, and was in the act of stepping forward to repeat it.—At that moment, Kitty was stirring up the fire; she had the tongs in her right hand. She marked the harshness of her husband, and heard the cry

of her favorite child ; in an instant she seized the boy's arm with her left hand, and drew him behind her, out of the reach of her husband's grasp ; at the same moment, she raised the tongs over her head, and, with a single but effectual sweep, cleared the table of its contents in the twinkling of an eye ; bottles and glasses were broken to atoms upon the floor. The contending parties stood, for a few seconds, fiercely eyeing each other. ' What do you mean by this ? ' cried Ethan, in great anger.—' You're a brute,' replied the exasperated wife.—' Dare you say this to me, in my own house ! I'll make you pay for it,' cried he, holding up his finger.—' Your own house ! ' she exclaimed, with a look of ineffable derision. ' Hasn't my father paid for it, already ? ' she continued, with an expression of taunting bitterness.—' You shall answer for this,' cried Ethan, boiling over with anger, and stamping his foot upon the floor.—' I'll never answer a drunkard,' she exclaimed, as she hurled the tongs upon the hearth.—He stepped towards her in great wrath, but

his companions interposed, and held him back, while his highly-exasperated wife walked slowly out of the room, leading off the terrified little Elkanah, who, never having witnessed such a scene before, was now made acquainted with a new code of sensations. Farmer Grafton's friends pacified him, as well as they could, and took their leave. As they walked homeward, one of them observed that Ethan was in the wrong to kick the little boy as he did. That was readily admitted; but another remarked, that he had as lief be one of Samson's foxes, as to have such a firebrand tied to him for life. A third suggested, that he did not believe there had ever been any serious disagreement between them before. All three agreed, however, that Ethan was entirely right in one particular, and that his cider was certainly *equal to wine*. Pamela Mickle soon heard of the affair, and nearly wore out a pair of new shoes, in spreading intelligence of this domestic uproar from one end of Heathermead to the other. The match had turned out, as she affirmed, precisely as she expected from the very beginning.

“The better sort of people in Heathermead, I mean not the wealthier, but the Christian aristocracy of the village, were grieved, that old Jansen’s descendants should be visited with any serious affliction. They had remarked, with regret, that Farmer Grafton was not so attentive to his business as he used to be, and that he was getting somewhat engaged in horse-racing. In regard to his wife, it was admitted, on all hands, that her temper was exceedingly violent, when excited by a sense of injustice; but it was agreed, that it did not exhibit itself upon ordinary occasions. Indeed,” said my old master, “Kitty Grafton had, not only a generous, but a magnanimous spirit. She was an admirable housewife, and devotedly attached to her husband, so long as he deserved her affection. With her, it was love for love: yet her affections were not governed by any selfish principle. There are gentle spirits, that can suffer all but death, and yet love on. There are not a few, who still love those barbarians, with whom marriage is a milder name for tyranny—they love

and cling to the very brutes, that rule them with an iron rod, and why?—because they are the fathers of their children! And, with such, this is cause enough why love should never die. There are some, who adhere to their drunken husbands, and seemingly with the same increasing measure of devotion, which they themselves bestow upon the vile objects of their idolatry. They love the very shadowy recollections of their brighter days; and, while those heartless wretches, who led their confiding steps to the altar, yet crawl, like diseased and degraded reptiles, upon the earth, the doting affection of their fond hearts is sufficiently powerful to beget a moral ophthalmia, and they can perceive nothing to paralyze their love. The heart of Kitty Grafton was cast in a different mould; and, though kind treatment would probably have preserved its affections, in all their original warmth and freshness, neglect could not fail to chill them through—abuse would certainly convert that heart to stone.

“By what process the reconciliation between

Ethan and his wife was achieved, I cannot tell. They were at church the next Sabbath; their conduct towards each other was apparently civil and becoming; but I thought it was not so affectionate as it had been.—When describing the Rhone and the Arve, an agreeable writer observes: ‘*The contrast between those two rivers is very striking; the one being as pure and limpid as the other is foul and muddy. Two miles below the place of their junction, an opposition and difference between this ill-sorted couple are still observable; these, however, gradually abate by long habit, till, at last, yielding to necessity, and those unrelenting laws that joined them together, they mix in perfect union, and flow in a common stream to the end of their course.*’* But for these unrelenting laws, how many ill-fated alliances would be severed! How many wretched beings would delight to break away from their loathsome, drunken yoke-fellows!

* Moore’s View of Society in France, &c. Vol. I. Let. 24.

Kitty Grafton had no ordinary share of pride withal ; and, next to being happy, came the desire of being thought so. For a time, she bore her afflictions in silence. If Ethan was more from home than formerly, she consoled herself with her children, and filled her time and her thoughts with her domestic concerns. Her little green-house and garden, in the care and cultivation of which, she had been abundantly instructed by her good old father and mother, still afforded her a source of rational satisfaction ; and, could she have been permitted to enjoy them, and to see her children rising into life, with a reasonable prospect of happiness, she might have lived on contented, though not absolutely happy ; and accommodated herself to her lot, as the wife of a drinking, prodigal husband—for to this degrading appellation Ethan Grafton now bid fair to establish an indisputable claim.

“ Among his acquaintances, there were some, who were not entirely willing to allow, that Ethan’s cider was *equal to wine* ; and, after a fair trial at the Little Black Dragon, a tavern

in Heathermead, upon thanksgiving night, (on which occasion, the judges were so drunk, that it was impossible to obtain any thing like a righteous decision of the question,) it was determined to continue the matter, for further advisement, at Ethan Grafton's cottage, upon the ensuing Christmas eve.

“In the course of those unprofitable years, which had followed one another, like billows upon the ocean, since old Jansen died, Ethan Grafton had frittered away the estate in an unaccountable manner. Under the old man's will, the fee, or full property of the estate, was in himself; and his wife had no other claim upon the soil, which her father had won by the sweat of his brow, than her right of dower. Even this partial interest, Ethan had induced her, upon various pretences, to relinquish, from time to time, until it remained to her in the cottage only, and a few acres around it. The ready money, which old Jansen had left, had begun, after six or eight months from his decease, to disappear. The stock, in the course of a few years, were either sold,

or had died off; and, as Ethan neglected his farm, their places were not supplied. In about seven years after Jansen's death, although there was some show of property, and the stock of cider was still kept up, (for the apples grew without culture, and it cost little to grind them,) yet it was pretty well understood, that Ethan Grafton, to use the village phrase, was getting dreadfully down to heel. It would have been better for Ethan, if the real extent of the small residuum of estate, that he yet possessed, had been more clearly defined, in the eyes of his neighbors. But he was still supposed to be a man of property, though his affairs had, somehow or another, become embarrassed. He accordingly, on the strength of this delusion, continued in tolerable credit; and was able, now and then, with a little swaggering, to borrow a few hundreds; and thus, by increasing the burden upon his already broken shoulders, to complete the work of his destruction. For one, that knew how much of Ethan's property was deeply mortgaged, and how little was clear, hundreds

in the village of Heathermead were entirely unacquainted with the facts. He still, like most other mortgagors, was himself in possession, exercising visible acts of ownership over the property. How often do we witness the evil consequences of such a condition of things as this ! The man, who frequently reiterates a lie, is not more liable, at last, to fancy it is true, than the proprietor of mortgaged premises to believe they are his own. How frequently such estates are found, after the death of such nominal proprietors, inadequate to pay the debt, for whose security they were conveyed ! Yet how frequently is it the fact, that such nominal owners of estates, such *bona fide* proprietors of nothing, have eaten, and drunken, and arrayed themselves, for years, upon the strength of this imaginary wealth ! Poor Ethan Grafton actually believed himself, even then, to be a man of considerable property ; and employed no small part of his time,—when not occupied in the demonstration of his everlasting problem, that his cider was *equal to wine*,—in unsuccessful efforts to

obtain additional loans, upon his overburdened estates.

“It was long a mystery, in the eyes of those, who really knew that Ethan Grafton had deprived himself of three fourths, at least, of all his estate, by what means he had squandered his possessions. The secret was well known to a few. Neglect of his business readily accounted for his not growing richer. Horse-racing, betting, and drinking had undoubtedly diminished his property, in a very sensible degree. Still, however, the rapid loss of his wealth, especially during the two last years, was an enigma, which the wiseacres of Heathermead were utterly unable to explain.

“As the destruction of the outer works is commonly among the earliest operations of an enemy, so the first manifestations of the power of that evil demon, which warred against the peace of this once happy family, were the fallen fences, and dilapidated walls, and broken windows, about the cottage at Heathermead End. Kitty had long found it extremely difficult to obtain money from her

husband, for the common occasions of herself and her children. Debts accumulated rapidly, and duns became importunate and troublesome. One morning, Ethan had just finished his breakfast, of which a portentous pitcher of cider formed a component part, when he perceived Mr. Bagley, the grocer, riding towards the cottage. Ethan comprehended his object, and concealed himself in the cellar, previously directing Elkanah, whose mother had stepped out, to say, that he was not at home. Old Gotlieb had not read the Bible to his grandchild in vain. To the grocer's inquiry, the boy therefore replied, that his father had told him to say he was not at home. This, of course, produced an unpleasant eclaireissement; and, when the grocer had gone, Elkanah received a buffet, which brought him to the ground. This broken-spirited boy, who had repeatedly witnessed the dreadful uproar, which arose between his parents, in consequence of his complaints, suffered in silence, and crept, for refuge, to the garret.

“Notwithstanding the immense quantity of cider, which Ethan’s farm produced, of which he sold a large amount, in barrels and bottles, he never seemed to have any ready money ; and, whenever his wife attempted to get an insight into his affairs, he told her that women were fools, and knew nothing of business. They had, at this time, one girl and four boys ; and their mother, though frequently exasperated by her husband, still retained her maternal feelings, and patched and repatched the ragged remnants of their little apparel ; and, as yet, though hopeless of their father, gave not all up for lost. Ethan Grafton had, for some time, delivered large quantities of his cider at the distillery ; and, of late, he had been in the habit of receiving a few barrels of cider brandy, in part payment. For more than a year, he had suffered severely from the operation upon his system of that malic acid, which abounds in cider, and whose effects are perfectly well understood by medical men. He had become habitually subject to severe colic ; he had even indicated no equivocal

symptoms of partial palsy. But he began to feel essentially better, from the occasional employment of the cider brandy. Christmas eve was drawing nigh, upon which occasion the question was to be fully settled and determined, whether Ethan Grafton's cider were or were not *equal to wine*; and, as he was determined to establish its reputation beyond the possibility of all future doubt,—having selected the bottles, which he designed to produce, he abstracted thirty-three and a third per centum of their contents, and then filled up the bottles with an equal amount of cider brandy.

“When old Gotlieb Jansen perceived himself to be surrounded by a little progeny of the second generation, he introduced into the cottage at Heathermead End a custom, associated with his boyish recollections of ‘Fader Land,’ on the borders of the Rhine. A small tree, commonly the box, in its pot of earth, was introduced into the best room of the cottage, upon merry Christmas eve; and the old man, with the assistance of Theresa,

scattered some gold leaf upon its deep green foliage, and attached to its branches those little presents, which were designed for their grandchildren. These annual arrangements had been, for years, a source of heartfelt satisfaction to Gotlieb and his wife; and to their youthful descendants an object of delightful anticipation. After the death of her parents, Kitty Grafton had never omitted the custom, upon the return of this happy festival. The golden tree had never failed, once in every year, at the appointed time, to spread its luxuriant branches; and her little ones, happy, at least for a brief season, had been permitted to approach in order, and, with their own hands, to gather its valuable fruit. Hitherto, Ethan himself had appeared to feel some degree of interest on these occasions; and, although with increasing indifference to the happiness of his children from year to year, he had commonly contributed a small sum for the purchase of those toys, which were essential to their short-lived carnival, upon Christmas eve.—Upon the present occasion, Kitty's

suggestions and hints were of no avail. Ethan turned a deaf ear to them all ; and, to her direct request for a very trifling sum, to purchase the means of happiness for the children upon this occasion, he replied, with great harshness, that he had not a shilling ; and knew not where to get one ; and that it was a stupid, German custom, and had lasted long enough ; and that he would hear no more of it. Though highly offended by Ethan's answer, which contained something like a reflection on her parents, she, for once, restrained her temper, and walked silently away. Her husband, probably, would not have opposed her wishes, and denied his children these long-expected pleasures, which came but once a year, had he not made an important engagement for that very evening. He well knew, that more than a dozen of his associates were then to assemble in his cottage, for an object of no less importance, than the decision of a question, in which his feelings had become deeply involved—whether Ethan Grafton's cider were *equal to wine*. His best apartment would be required for the

use of this convention, and Elkanah's services would be indispensable. But of all this his wife suspected nothing. We are not prone to call those to participate in our privy counsels, who are well known to be heartily opposed to our practice and our principles; and it is a mere act of justice to state, that, however excitable and violent, the temper of Kitty Grafton received no adscititious stimulus from any intoxicating liquor. No pledged member of a thoroughgoing cold-water society ever abstained more rigidly from all inebriating drinks. The occasional flashings of her natural fire were said, by those, who had witnessed them, to be sufficiently alarming—the stimulus of alcohol would probably have driven her, sooner or later, during her domestic troubles, to madness or to murder.

“When her husband had thus refused to assist her, in furnishing out the Christmas festival for their children, she went up into her chamber, and sat down with her arms folded, and an angry cloud upon her brow. She had not continued long, ruminating upon her

misfortunes, (for every new affliction naturally served to revive the gloomy record of the past,) when Elkanah, who had been present, during the conversation between his parents, crept up into the apartment.—‘Mother,’ said he, ‘I wouldn’t be worried about it ; we can have our tree just as well as we had it last year.’—She gazed upon her first born ; —her features, for an instant, changed their expression of anger for that of sadness ; and her eyeballs were glazed by the gathering tears, which oozed from the natural fountain too scantily to fall ; like the moisture, which occasionally floats over the brassy sky, during the burning solstice, but descends not in showers, and is speedily absorbed. ‘You can have your tree, Elkanah,’ she replied, ‘that your poor old grandfather took so much pleasure to prepare for you, and whose leaves he tipped with gold leaf. That is in my closet ; but I have nothing to hang upon it for you all, as I used to have.’—‘Never mind, mother,’ said Elkanah, ‘we can do very well ; Richard has got his hum-top that

he had last year; just as good as ever; and Rachel has got her doll; Eli says he will hang up his whistle; and, before to-morrow night, I can whittle out a go-cart for Robert.'—'And what will you have to hang up for yourself, Elkanah?' inquired his mother; she seemed, for a brief space, to forget her misery, while listening to Elkanah's ingenious device for the celebration of the festival. A faint ray of sunlight beamed upon her features, as she contemplated the contented disposition of her child, who could thus volunteer to be sufficiently happy in the enjoyment of second-hand pleasures.—'And what,' she repeated, 'will you hang upon the tree for yourself, Elkanah?'—'I've been thinking, mother,' said he, 'that I should like to hang up the Bible that grandfather gave me.'

"Christmas eve at length arrived. The tree had been placed in the centre of their bettermost room, its appointed place upon such occasions, for many years; and already its branches bent beneath the burden, in part, of its last year's fruit. Kitty Grafton, sur-

rounded by her five children, who were resolved to be happy, upon any terms, was busily engaged in directing the simple ceremonies of the *fête*. Her countenance had even lost that expression of bitterness and anxiety, which, of late years, had predominated there. The strength of the maternal principle had subdued all foreign recollections for the time. The almost unvarying custom of her husband to return, of late years, at an advanced hour of the night, had relieved her entirely from all fear of interruption. The sound, therefore, of his well-known tramp, on the entry floor, filled the assembled group with consternation. Even the mother became pale for an instant. Her husband's voice, calling loudly for Elkanah, summoned the poor boy from the apartment. In a short time he returned with his father, bringing in as many bottles of cider, as they could conveniently carry. No sooner did Ethan discover the preparations for the festival, and the tree in the midst, than he inquired, with a terrible oath, addressing himself to his wife, who had

risen from her seat, if he had not told her that he would have no more of such German trumpery in his house.—‘Haven’t I a right,’ said she, as the color mantled into her face,—‘haven’t I a right, in my old father’s house, to make his grandchildren happy?’—‘Your old father,’ said he, ‘was an old German beggar.’—‘You are a liar,’ she quickly replied, as she clinched her fist, and her eyes shot fire.—Ethan hastily put his bottles on the floor, and all the children but Elkanah ran screaming in terror from the apartment.—‘There,’ said he, with another horrible oath, breaking the tree to pieces, and hurling the little tokens in every direction—‘that’s to begin with, and now, if you give me another saucy word, I’ll whip you to a jelly.’—During this ebullition of wrath, Elkanah, unperceived by his father, had picked up his little Bible, and concealed it in his bosom.—‘O, father,’ cried the agonized child, ‘beat me, father; I did it; don’t beat poor mother.’—‘Get out, you ill-begotten brat,’ cried the infuriated father.—‘Grafton,’ exclaimed his

wife, with an expression of mingled rage and scorn, 'I wish I was a man for five seconds, I'd strip your tawny hide from neck to heel!'—'Father, father,' cried Elkanah, 'look up the road; there's folks coming.'—'I see 'em,' said Ethan Grafton to the boy; 'clear off this rubbish right away, and set out the table; and as for you,' turning to his wife, 'if I wasn't agoing to have company, I'd jest cut a saplin, and strip you to the skin, and tie you up by your two thumbs, and, if I didn't cool your German blood for you, my name's not Ethan Grafton.'—'Grafton,' she replied, in a steadier tone, moving slowly towards the door, 'I'm glad to be gone from you and your gang. There'll be time enough to cut your saplin when they're gone; but, if you lay the weight of it on my body, I'll die in the struggle but I'll have your heart's blood.'—The guests were at the door; Ethan had no time to reply; and he bit his lip, and doubled his fist at his enraged wife, as she proceeded up stairs. Elkanah had cleared the room, and set out the table, and stood

trembling in the corner, awaiting his father's commands.

“After such vulgar greetings, and horse laughs, and slappings of shoulders, as commonly mark the first gathering of a rustic club, the company assembled around the table, upon which Elkanah had been directed to place several bottles of cider and a sufficient number of glasses. It would be an unprofitable task to attempt a description of those individuals, who were convened in Ethan's cottage, for the purpose of settling the ‘cider question.’ Next to Dick Dagget, the butcher, who had relinquished business, and retired upon a handsome reserve, after cheating his creditors out of seven eighths of their lawful demands, the most important personage was Dr. Pullet, a rubicund, full-favored, notable blackleg, who had a local habitation and a name, in many towns and villages, in which he had exercised his skill, by filching the unwary of their cash in hand; and, if it better comported with the convenience of his cullies, the doctor was exceedingly ac

commodating, and would try a rubber, for almost any stake, from a stout gelding to a gooseberry tart. The residue of the group consisted chiefly of young farmers and mechanics, who had long shown a preference for Ethan Grafton's cider, before the pleasures of their own firesides.—‘What’s the matter, Grafton?’ inquired one of the company, soon after they were seated; ‘you look down in the mouth.’—‘O, no great affair,’ replied Ethan, scratching his head,—‘Elky, my boy, fetch the corkscrew.’—‘I guess he’s thinking about the cattle that Pullet won of him last night, at the Little Black Dragon,’ said one of these boors, with a reckless laugh.—‘I hope a little matter like that don’t trouble ye, Mr. Grafton,’ said Pullet.—‘The dogs take the cattle,’ replied Ethan; ‘if a body hadn’t nothing more to be vexed about than the loss of a yoke of oxen, he’d be pretty well off, I reckon—there, tell us what ye think o’ that,’ filling their glasses and pushing them round.—‘That’s royal cider, Grafton,’ cried Dagget, smacking his lips. ‘But, for pity’s sake, tell us whose

grave you're agoing to dig to-night? you're as solemn as an owl, Ethan; what's the matter?'—'Why,' said Grafton, 'there's a skil-linton, you know, in every house.'—'Ha, ha! that's it, is it?' cried Dagget; 'the old black mare kicks up, does she, Ethan? why don't ye switch the jade as I do mine.'—'That's well enough for you, Dick,' Ethan replied, 'but it won't work quite so well with the German breed, I tell ye. I shall have to try it though, I guess, afore long.—But let's hear what ye think o' that cider.'—'Why, Mr. Grafton,' said Pullet, pouring out a fresh tumbler, 'this is superexcellent cider; there can be no better; but, upon honor, it isn't quite *equal to wine*.'—'That's all you know about it,' cried Ethan. 'You're up to cut and shuffle, doctor; but I wouldn't say much about cider an I was you. This here, that you've been a drinking, isn't such superexcellent cider arter all. The old man, Jansen, made this, more than ten years ago, and its lost its strength, and got a leetle flattish; if you should drink a barrel on't, you wouldn't feel

a mite brisker.’—‘I don’t know about that,’ said one of the company, ‘I’ve drank only two tumblers and a half, and it makes me feel pretty comical any how.’—‘I’ll show ye cider,’ said Ethan. ‘Elky—here—Elkanah—where’s that brat gone?’—‘He’s asleep,’ said one of the guests.—‘Wake up, you lazy dog,’ cried Ethan, as he pulled him violently by the ear, ‘wake up, sir, and, if I catch ye sleeping agin, I’ll give ye something to keep ye awake, I’ll warrant ye ; here, take a basket, and bring up ten bottles from the lower shelf, and if you bring the wrong ones, I’ll take both your ears off.’—Elkanah rubbed his eyes on the sleeve of his coat, and proceeded to the cellar.—‘What do you value your gray mare at, Mr. Grafton?’ inquired Doctor Pullet.—‘My gray mare,’ replied Ethan, ‘why somewhere ’twixt one and two hundred.’—‘Well,’ continued the doctor, ‘I don’t altogether want to take away that yoke of cattle, that I won from you, at the Dragon, without giving ye a chance to win ’em back ; I’ll put ’em agin your gray mare, and try another

rubber.'—'Done,' cried Ethan Grafton, slapping the table as he spoke; 'but here comes my snail of a boy; let's try the cider first—what made ye so etarnal long, ye lazy brat?'—'I come as quick as I could, father,' said Elkanah.—'Ye lie, ye did'nt; get into the corner, till I call ye,' said Ethan, shoving him aside.—'There, tell us what ye think of that,' said he, as he poured out the new specimen.—'That caps all,' cried Dagget, as he held out his empty glass to be replenished, 'that goes to the right spot any how.'—'The best cider I ever tasted by all odds,' exclaimed the doctor. 'Still I'll tell ye what,—there seems to be a—sort of a—want of a—kind of a—' 'Haw, haw, haw,' cried half a dozen voices. 'It's pretty good cider I guess,' said Gibbins, the journeyman tailor, 'for it makes your tongue take plaguey long stitches, doctor.'—'I shan't cabbage any on it, Gibbins,' cried the doctor rather angrily.—'Don't spose ye will,' replied Gibbins with a sneer: 'how's your patient, doctor, that I saw you a physicking this morning?'—'I

‘don’t know what patient you mean,’ replied the doctor gruffly.—‘Why, don’t you remember?’ said Gibbins, suppressing an ill-natured laugh; ‘I mean Deacon Lumkins’ jackass.’—This was too much, before such respectable company, even for a horse-doctor, and Pullet threw a whole glass of this admirable cider in the journeyman tailor’s face, who, having nothing in his tumbler, where-with to return the compliment, hurled the vessel itself at the head of his antagonist.—For five and twenty minutes, the bettermost room in the cottage at Heathermead End was a scene of the most ungovernable uproar. Dagget, the butcher, held back the doctor, who had whipped out his fleam from its leathern sheath, and with the most frightful imprecations, was rushing forward to bury it in the tailor’s jugular.—‘Don’t hold him, Dagget,’ cried the little journeyman; ‘let him come on, if he wants to; and, if I don’t take his measure, my name isn’t Billy Gibbins.’—There can be little doubt, if Dagget’s strength had not restrained the doctor from close con-

tact with his adversary, that the tailor would have cut out for him, in horrible style. For, though excited by the cider, he was comparatively self-possessed, and, happening to have his shears in his side-pocket, he had grasped them firmly with both hands, and, dropping on one knee, after the fashion of the middle rank, during the formation of a defensive hollow square, he would have awaited the doctor's charge, and, in all human probability, have received him on the point of his professional bayonet.

“After a deal of soothing and persuasion, the contending parties were induced to make the matter up. The tailor admitted, that he did not intend to disparage either of the learned professions; the doctor affirmed, that he considered Mr. Gibbins as respectable a tailor, as he did, before their unpleasant difference; and the company once more resumed their seats around the table.—Dagget, who really appeared disposed to act as a peacemaker, upon the present occasion, readily perceived that the reconciliation was not precisely com-

plete; and endeavored, while Ethan pushed the bottle, to revive the spirit of good-fellowship among the guests. 'I raally love cider,' said he, as he turned off another glass. 'I guess I could get along without water; I should miss cider though, dreadfully. But I'll tell ye what it is, it's the beatemost stuff that ever was, to make a body feel crusty. There's old Miss Belcher, my wife's mother, you never see how it acts on her; two tumblers o' good ripe cider'll make the old woman as good-natured as a puppy-dog, and she'll think the children can't have half enough mince-pie and apple-dowdy; when she takes about four, she'll be as funny as all-possessed; but, when she gets six full tumblers under her skin, then look out for't, I tell ye. The steam's pretty well up then, and there's no safety-valve but the old woman's mouth. She's lost her teeth, you know, and she does sizzle and sputter away like a fury. She knocks the children about like nothing, and gives nobody no peace, till she's slept it all off next morning. I ax'd

McGrudy, the schoolmaster, who knows a' most every thing, what he thought was the reason why cider made folks crosser than any other drink, and he gi'ed me a queer answer to be sure: said he, "If the ould apple o' discord brought sin into the warld in the beginning, isn't the juice o' it enow to kaap up a clish-maclaver to the dee o' judgment, mon?" —

The guests laughed heartily at Dagget's humorous remarks, with the exception of the doctor and the tailor. Their gorges were evidently still up. Each sat, with a cigar in his mouth, his chair inclined backward, and his chin pointed towards the ceiling.—Dagget, who had really a great respect for the doctor, was not thus to be baffled, in his efforts to restore harmony. 'Doctor,' said he, 'what is the reason, that, while beer makes a body sleepy, cider is such a cross kind of a drink?' — 'It's owing to the disgestion,' replied the doctor; 'it produces a sort of pulmonary combustibility in the most vitalest parts.'—The tailor cut his eye at Ethan Grafton, with a half-drunken, half-comical expression, as he

filled his tumbler.—Dagget, who had ever looked upon the longest words as the outward and visible signs of the greatest learning, was, for a moment, silent. ‘Dr. Pullet,’ said he, after a brief pause, ‘I wonder you confine your practice entirely to horses.’—‘Oh, sir,’ replied the doctor, ‘the other branches of our profession is overstocked. It is an easy matter to attend to the diseases of the human race. They can tell their complaints, Mr. Dagget. I have always devoted myself to the noble animal, sir; but I believe I must go, Mr. Grafton.’—‘Oh, no,’ said Ethan, ‘you haven’t tasted my best cider yet, by a chalk and a half.’ The doctor, however, insisted on the necessity of his departure, as he was to meet a few friends, that evening, at the Little Black Dragon; he promised, however, to recollect the rubber, which he had engaged to play with Ethan Grafton, upon a stake of a yoke of oxen against the gray mare.—‘The doctor’s a man o’ great larning,’ said Dagget, after he had gone.—‘He’s an ignorant ramus,’ said the tailor.—‘Gibbins, you’re no judge,’ cried Dag-

get, somewhat nettled.—‘A tailor’s about as good a judge as a butcher,’ retorted Gibbins.—‘I see you want to quarrel with me,’ replied Dagget, ‘though I saved your bones from being broken just now.’—‘Come, come, don’t let’s have any more o’ this tarnal gabble,’ exclaimed Ethan, in a roaring voice, ‘finish this cider, and let’s have another lot. As to the doctor’s larning, I’m no great shakes of a judge myself, but he has a sort of a pleasant, winning way with him.’—‘So he has,’ replied the tailor dryly, ‘if you’ll let him cut and shuffle himself. He won your oxen, Ethan, and your great white horse, slick enough ; and he’s won more money of you than’—‘Do hold your tongue, Gibbins,’ exclaimed Ethan, getting rather angry, and nodding his head in the direction of his boy ; ‘there’s no need o’ telling every thing to the town-crier.—Here, you sir, Elkanah, if you tell a word you hear in this here room, I’ll skin ye alive.’—‘I wont, father,’ said the trembling boy.—It was at this stage of the trial, that some of the junior judges, at the farther end of the table, whose

voices had not been heard before, above concert pitch, began to be rather uproarious. The removal of a great man from an assembly, whose presence has been somewhat oppressive, will occasionally liberate inferior spirits from their thralldom. Such was the obvious effect of the doctor's departure. The confusion of voices began to be immense. No one cared a fig to understand his neighbor, and every one strove, by elevating his own voice, to drown the voices of all others, and to be heard alone. It is impossible to produce any thing like a faithful description of the scene. Here were ten or a dozen speakers, every one more or less excited by his potations of Ethan's cider, and each in his own way ; with some, anger prevailed ; with others, pride ; and with others, simple good nature and a feeling of mawkish philanthropy. The continual strife of tongues begat the most unintelligible jargon ; words ran foul of one another in every direction ; sentences were dislocated, and parts became strangely dovetailed together in the oddest of all imaginable connec-

tions. Of the little that was meant almost nothing was understood. The absurdity of the scene must have been surprisingly heightened, by the wildest jesticulations; every vessel occasionally dancing on the table, as the speakers gave it a tremendous slap by way of enforcing their remarks; and, now and then, there might be heard the crash of broken bottles, shattered for sport, or by way of testing their relative strength.—‘I’ve drank wine in my time, I reckon, as well as yourself,’ cried a dapper little fellow.—Pshaw! that last bottle was a—Holloa—When I sold meat, I always used to favor the poor—No great shakes neither—I’ll bate ye a dollar—’Tisn’t in the like o’ you—That are colt will go—Sir, nobody pitches me on the point o’ rationality—I feel for the poor—Fill your glasses, my boys, and lets see if this here cider isn’t equal to—Fire and fury, I got the burning eend o’ my cigar right into my mouth—Wouldn’t give the vally o’ my bodkin for all he knows about—My old mare’s able to—Slam bang—There she goes—Crash—Haw,

haw—Crash—More bottles I say—Last town-meeting day I—Hold your yop—I won't—Its a lie, that's flat—I say as I said afore, he's an ignorant ramus—If you say—Come, fill your glasses—That's what you shan't—Say it agin, and I'll run my fist down your—I say he's an ignorant ra—Whack—Crack—Take that—Take care, Dagget ; he's got his shears out—I don't care the vally of a sausage for his—Crack, crack, whack.—Over went the table, lights, and glasses. The butcher and the tailor were in a moment rolling on the floor.—Take away the villain's shears—I've got 'em—Pull 'em apart—No, no ; let 'em fight it out—Peg him well, Dagget—It's a tarnal shame—There comes the claret—Cry enough, Gibbins, or you'll never take another stitch in this world—Gie me my shears—I won't—Well, enough, then.—At this stage of the performances, Ethan had seized Elkanah, who had fallen asleep, notwithstanding this uproar, for it was now late at night. The boy screamed aloud, under the severe buffets of his drunken father—the door, at

that instant, flew open,—Kitty Grafton rushed into the apartment, and, seizing Ethan by his shaggy black hair, hurled him to the ground. It was the work of a moment. Disabled as he was by drunkenness, he rose for a last effort ; and, grasping a junk bottle, he gave her a terrible blow upon the side of her head. She fell immediately upon the floor, and the blood spirted copiously from the wound. Elkanah had rushed into the road, crying murder ; and the inhabitants of the nearest cottage soon hurried to the spot. It was at first supposed, that the blow had proved fatal ; but, after half an hour, the poor woman uttered a groan, and gradually recovered her senses. Even this brutal husband seemed to be shocked, by the contemplation of his own near approach to the gallows ; and, for a whole week, he abstained from intoxicating drink. On the first day after this event, he even labored diligently in the field ; and, when he came home at night, Elkanah ran to his mother in amazement, as she lay upon her sick bed, exclaiming, ‘ Oh, mother, only think, father has

come home, and he isn't drunk in the least.' —After this terrible catastrophe, the company dispersed with all possible expedition; and, the next day, when they had slept off the effects of their debauch, they agreed, with the most perfect unanimity, that Ethan Grafton's cider was *equal to wine*.

“During the drunken festival of the preceding night, Ethan Grafton had not found it necessary, for the purpose of maintaining the reputation of his cider, and establishing his boast, in its fullest extent, that it was *equal to wine*, to employ his choice reserve. The bottles, whose contents he had enforced with cider brandy, remained untasted in his cellar. Good ripe cider, containing from seven to ten per cent. of alcohol, was enough for the work. During the week, which immediately followed this domestic outrage, Ethan, who really appeared to show some tokens of compunction, remained at home, or upon the farm. A parishioner,” said my old master, “gave me the first tidings of the affair. Neither Ethan nor his wife was

at meeting, on the following Sabbath. In the morning and afternoon Elkanah occupied the pew, by himself. I had long remarked the melancholy expression upon the features of this broken-spirited boy. Upon the present occasion, I was particularly struck with it. I had preached on the subject of prayer, as essential to domestic happiness. After the service, he lingered near me for some time. I inquired if he wished to speak with me. He seemed exceedingly embarrassed, and the tears came into his eyes. I asked him aside what he desired of me : he replied, that he wished me to pray for his father and mother, for they didn't love each other. I inquired if any thing had happened : he replied, ' Yes, sir, but I have promised father, that I would not tell.'—I then informed him, that I knew the whole, and should surely pray for them all ; and the little fellow seemed to be comforted. The next morning, I went to their cottage, and did my best. It was a hard case. Old Gotlieb had often regretted, that Kitty took no interest in her Bible. Religious

sentiments had never taken root in the heart of this poor woman, nor in that of her husband ; and the present stubborn condition of the soil presented little hope of success in the cultivation of such exotics. I visited them very often, but it was a vain attempt. Each avoided me at last, much in the same manner as I have told you Ethan avoided the grocer, who came for the amount of his bill. When I first called, after the uproar of Christmas eve, Elkanah came running to meet me, at some distance from the cottage, begging me, with an expression of alarm, not to tell his father, that he had asked me to pray for them. Grafton received me civilly, and seemed to be somewhat ashamed of his conduct ; but he had already recommenced his vile practices. As I entered, he was coming up from the cellar, wiping his mouth upon his sleeve, and had apparently been once more at his cider. I desired to see them together ; and, with evident reluctance, he showed me up stairs. Kitty was lying on her bed, with a handkerchief bound over her forehead. When

she saw me, 'I'm glad you've come, Mr. More,' said she.—For a moment, I hoped I might be useful, but soon found myself mistaken, when I comprehended her motive. 'I'm glad you've come,' she continued, 'to see how this villain has used me: you was a friend of my old father and mother. What would they have said to this! Look here, Mr. More,'—removing the handkerchief, and showing the marks of the blow—and a severe one it must have been. 'There, sir, see what I've got by marrying a drunkard. If there was a thing my old father hated, it was just such a dirty drunkard as he is.'—'Mr. More,' cried Ethan, as he sat upon a chest, 'jest hear to reason.'—'You talk about reason!' she cried; 'if I was the devil himself, I'd just as soon talk about righteousness,—reason—reason to be sure—it almost chokes me to look at you, you base, drunken villain.'—'You had better suffer your husband to speak,' said I mildly.—'Husband!'—said she, with an expression of rage and contempt: 'he wants to speak, does he?—He's so

drunk now you can't understand him ; besides he can't talk two minutes, to save his soul, without a pitcher or a bottle of cider—don't let the villain have a bottle—he'll give me another blow, as like as not.'—'Mrs. Grafton,' said I, taking my hat, 'if I cannot be of any use to you, I will take my leave ; I cannot be of any use, unless I can understand the right and wrong of this matter ; and that I cannot do, unless you permit Mr. Grafton to speak.'—'Well, Mr. More,' said Kitty, in a lower and a milder key, 'you was always kind to me from a child, and I like to look upon the friends of my parents ; and, for your sake, I'll let him speak.'—'Sir,' said Ethan, 'I'll tell ye the hull story, if she'll let me. Ye see, doctor—I mean Mr. More'—'There now, didn't I tell ye so ?' cried Kitty ; 'he thought he was talking to Doctor Pullet, the gambler. that cheated him out of his oxen, and his horse, and the watch my old father gave him, to keep for Elkanah, when he grew up, and the'——'Stop, stop, Kitty,' said I, 'let him tell his story, as you promised you would.'

—‘I was only a going to say,’ continued Ethan, ‘that I did take rather too much cider a Christmas night, and she pulled me over, afore all my company, by the hair o’ my head ; and, when I was in a passion, I struck her with the bottle, and I’ve been sorry ever since. Now, Mr. More, I’m ready to make it up with her afore you. There, if that isn’t fair, what is?’—‘Well,’ said I to her, ‘what do you say to that, Kitty?’—‘I say, he’s a liar, and fool, and a drunkard, that’s what I say, Mr. More,’ said she. ‘He’s a liar, for he hasn’t told half the truth ; he knows, that I pulled him over, because he was half murdering Elkanah. He’s a fool to think I’ll ever make up with him ; not I indeed. I told him long ago, that I’d never forgive the weight of his finger, laid on me in anger : does the fool think I’ll ever forgive such a blow as this ! and he’s a drunkard, as every body knows. I needn’t prove that, I suppose. He’s drunk now ; he’s been guzzling cider this morning, though it isn’t nine o’clock.’—‘No such thing,’ cried Ethan, ‘I haven’t touched a

drop.'—'What did you go down cellar for? I heard the cellar door open and shut.'—'What did I go down for?—I didn't go for cider any how—cider's got to hurt me considerable. It's jest this, Mr. More, I'm a giving up cider pretty much, for I find a leetle cider brandy eases my pain, and makes me feel a sight better. But you see how it is, Mr. More; I'm not a going to call hard names, as she does; that isn't what I calls Christian. You see what a firebrand she is. This is all I've got to say, you see what she is.'—Kitty knit her brows and compressed her lips, and seemed to be gathering her strength, for an explosion of some sort; and Ethan, as she turned her eyes upon him, seemed to cower before the impending tempest.—'Yes,' said she, after a brief pause, 'you see what she is'—pointing to her wound, which the agitation of her feelings had caused to bleed afresh—'you see what she is—a poor broken-headed, and broken-hearted, but not broken-spirited woman—thank God and the blood of my old German father for the last;'

and, as she uttered these words, she set her teeth and clinched her fist, and looked at Ethan, with mingled defiance and contempt. —‘ You see *what she is*—the mother of five starving children—the wife of an unfeeling, brutal drunkard.—Ethan Grafton,’ she cried, raising herself upon her bed, while her countenance underwent an astonishing change, —‘ you once saw *what she was*.’—‘ I confess,’ said my old master, “ with my perfect recollection of her great beauty and many attractions, in her youth, the tone, in which she uttered these words, touched me to the soul.—Her voice faltered ; its accents became comparatively gentle ; her lips quivered with intense emotion ; and her eyes filled with tears.—‘ Ethan Grafton,’ she repeated, ‘ you once saw *what she was*—she was young and light-hearted, and the hard earnings of her father—whom you delight to call an old German beggar—God forgive you, for she never will—those hard earnings, and they were abundant, were all marked for her own. When she had given you her heart, this poor,

confiding idiot persuaded her doting father to bestow those hard earnings upon you. If you had not broken her heart, she would neither sorrow nor sigh for her wasted possessions. And what has made her the firebrand that you say she is? Was she not always a kind wife and devoted mother, until you took your ill courses? Did she ever give you one unkind word, until you became a drunkard? Did she ever dream of raising a finger against you, until you lifted your own unnatural hand against your unoffending children, the bone of her bone and the flesh of her flesh? Might not the violence of her temper have slumbered forever, if you had not become a spendthrift, and a gambler, and a sot?—Look at him, Mr. More; the brute is half asleep.’—So indeed he seemed. ‘Why do I waste my breath upon such a drunken carcass?’ she exclaimed.

“It was an impracticable case, as I told you,” said my old master. “I inquired, if she ever read her Bible. She frankly confessed that she never did. She said, that Elkanah had

sometimes come and sat down by her, at the bed side, and read portions of the Psalms ; but, that her brain seemed to be on fire so continually, that she took no pleasure therein, nor in any thing else. She even declared to me, that she believed she was losing her interest in her children. When I left the cottage, Elkanah went with me a few rods upon my way. The poor boy solicited permission to come and live with me : and, in the very earnestness of his desire, as he enumerated the different ways, in which he could make himself useful in my service. I turned from him to hide my emotion. I bade him remember, that we were all born into a state of trial ; that he was called, at an early age, to bear his cross ; that it was not a light one ; but that God would surely support him. I reminded him, that his three brothers and his sister were almost dependent upon him, in the present state of the family. As we parted, he kissed my hand—his eyes were full of tears—‘ Mr. More,’ said he, ‘ if I do the best I can, you will

pray for me, won't you, sir?'—'I will—I will, my poor child,' said I, 'to that God, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.'—He went back to the den of wretchedness, no doubt, with fear and trembling, and I pursued my way to the parsonage; revolving various projects, for the relief of this miserable household, yet fixing definitively upon none.

“The notoriety of this shameful affray spread far and wide, and became the signal for the gathering of those gregarious troubles and vexations, which, saith the proverb, seldom come alone. One opprobrious tale is frequently the nest egg of infamy.—Pamela Mickle had scarcely ceased to cackle, upon the present occasion, when every hen in the village of Heathermead began. Many disreputable facts were speedily related of Ethan Grafton; and, as it commonly occurs, they were of both kinds, described by the worthy Dr. Witherspoon, such as have never happened, and such as have. The voice of the people was decidedly in Kitty's favor. All

agreed that her temper was tremendous ; but, the conviction was very general, that it had never interfered with Ethan's domestic happiness, while he was temperate ; and, that the same strength and impetuosity of feeling, which had, of late, directed her words and actions against him, had guided her tongue and her heart as zealously in his favor, until he came to prefer his cups to her affection and respect.

“Duns began to press from every quarter. If, in poor Grafton's conscience, there yet remained a spot unseared, there seemed to be no lack of special mortifications for its trial to the quick. The cider manufacture, however, was now at an end. Kitty used to say, that she should have rejoiced over the cause, though it swept off her paternal acres, had the remedy been applied, before the disease was past a cure. Several mortgagees entered for non-payment, and took possession of their mortgaged premises, which included not only Ethan's extensive orchards, but all the real estate left by old Jansen,

excepting, as I have stated, the cottage and a small parcel of land around it ; which he could not mortgage, as she had resolutely refused to relinquish her right of dower. Ethan therefore looked upon his remaining stock of cider and cider brandy as upon his last hope. Nevertheless he continued to drink on and be drunken.

“ Dr. Pullet was a man of honor, and had faithfully kept his word : the promised rubber had been long since played, at the Little Black Dragon ; the fortunate cards were never missing from the doctor’s pack ; and high, low, jack, and the game had settled the fate of Ethan’s gray mare.

It was long after this occurrence, that Kitty Grafton, by permission of the mortgagee, to whom the land now belonged, had gone with Elkanah into a wood lot, in which her father had taken no small portion of a husbandman’s pride, to pick up the fallen limbs for fuel. She had been absent a couple of hours. As she was returning, the younger children ran to inform her, that a strange man had come with a cart,

and taken away all the flowers in the green-house. This little building had been suffered hitherto to remain undisturbed. Most of the glasses had long since been destroyed, and Elkanah had shown himself exceedingly clever, in supplying their places with oiled paper. It served sufficiently well to shelter a few flowers and shrubs, which, through all her troubles, Kitty Grafton had still delighted to cherish. Several of them were perennials. Of these there were some, which she particularly valued—they had been fostered by the hands of her father—she had often been present, when the old man, from year to year, after delving, and pruning, and irrigating, had brought these beautiful exotics to display their utmost charms, and had called Theresa to contemplate their beauty.—Two of these had been objects almost of veneration with Gotlieb Jansen—they were from '*Fader Land*.' Such considerations as these, had they been faithfully revealed, would, in all probability, have imbued the spoiler with about the same

measure of restraining grace, that a wolf might be presumed to feel, when informed, that the lamb, upon which he feeds, was the pet of some gentle shepherdess. Kitty Grafton hastened to the spot, and gazed, with a look of grief and indignation, upon the vacant shelves. Nothing remained, save, here and there, a remnant of the clematis and the passion-flower, which she had trained against the wall, and whose roots and main branches had been hastily torn away. She had not long returned to the cottage, before she obtained an explanation, from an old dame, who was passing on horseback to Heathermead, from the next village, with her panniers of cream, and eggs, and herbs, and poultry, for sale. Of late years, she had commonly stopped at Kitty Grafton's cottage, and taken bunches of flowers to sell, for which she generally found a ready market, in Heathermead Centre. The old dame, about three miles back, had met the man, on his way to the city, with the whole stock of the green-house ; and gathered all the par-

ticulars, which she proceeded to recount. Ethan, it seems, had gambled the plants away to Dr. Pullet, a fortnight before, and having, that morning, informed him of his wife's absence, the doctor had sent his messenger to remove them to the city for sale, as expeditiously as possible.

“Kitty Grafton bit her lips; but she neither wept nor raved. Her silence, upon such occasions, was portentous. It was that ominous stillness that precedes the hurricane; and she took her revenge.

“Ethan did not return, till a late hour of the night. He came, cursing and swearing, into the house, anticipating Kitty's wrath, and preferring an uproar of his own creating. This evidence of sagacity was entirely compatible with drunkenness. He had obtained liquor somewhere, and was certainly drunk—drunk enough to be dry. His first thoughts were of cider, and his first step towards the cellar.—‘Give me a light,’ he cried, as he stumbled towards the door. ‘Elkanah,’ said Kitty Grafton, ‘don't you hear? Jump in a

moment and get your father a light.’—
“Why—a—holloa, Kitty—why that’s you now, how kind o’ civil you be. Like as may be not—we’ll—we’ll be happy yet.—I feel a kind o’ happy now—a—holloa, Elky dear,—lets have a little cider to show your poor old daddy the way to the candle.’—Elkanah gave the light to his mother, who handed it to her husband.—‘Take care, Ethan,’ said she, as she opened the cellar door, ‘don’t you fall; you know how I should miss you, if you should break your neck.’—‘Thank ye, Kitty,’ said he as he proceeded slowly down the cellar stairs; ‘this is jest as it wa—was in old times. I can’t help crying, you’re so—why, what makes the brandy smell so strong—holloa, I’ve cut my foot with a glass bottle.’—‘Cut your throat with another, you mean, drunken beast,’ cried Kitty Grafton, as she slammed to the cellar door and fastened it upon her husband.—Ethan, drunk as he was, soon perceived that he was imprisoned. After many ineffectual kicks and curses, he found release impossible, and he sought in

vain for comfort where he was. Every bottle had been demolished. Kitty had given a long hour to the work of destruction. Every barrel and keg had been staved ; and the cellar floor was soaked, with a mixture of cider, perry, and cider brandy. Ethan raved, and vowed eternal vengeance. Kitty made no reply ; but, securing the cellar door with a few nails, she threw herself upon her bed for the night, telling Elkanah, if he let his father out, he would certainly murder them all.

“The next morning, she drew the nails, as silently as possible ; and, setting the cellar door wide open, placed herself behind it, and waited the madman’s approach. He soon came forth, uttering torrents of oaths and imprecations, and armed with a stick of wood, which he had picked up in the cellar. He saw no one but Elkanah, and upon him he poured out his wrath.—‘Why did’nt you let me out, you young hell-hound ?’ said he, rushing towards him with his uplifted stick.—“ Oh, father—father ! ” cried the poor boy, as he fell on his knees, and lifted his clasped hands for

mercy. Ethan seized the lad by the shoulder, and lifted his stick in the air—the blow was about to fall, when he felt himself violently drawn back by the hair of his head.—He suddenly turned, while his eyes glared in horror upon the newly-sharpened carving knife within two inches of his throat.—‘Beg your life, you poor brute!’ cried Kitty, as she advanced the point slowly to his very windpipe.—‘Oh, don’t—don’t—mother,’ cried Elkanah.—‘Will ye beg your life, you drunken wretch?’ said Kitty, as she held him with the grasp of a tigress.—‘Murder, murder!’ cried Ethan, while his eyeballs seemed to start from their very sockets. He made a strong effort, and, escaping from her grasp, rushed into the road.

“It would be needless to pursue this painful and disgusting detail. He vented his rage, after dark, upon Kitty’s flower garden. In the morning not a vestige of it remained. He did not even spare the little compartment, which his poor children had been permitted to cultivate for themselves.

“Years rolled on—years of sheer misery, and domestic warfare. When Ethan came home drunk, she used to beat him with the broomstick or the poker. He, in return, when he had recovered from the effects of the liquor, would cut up her clothes, and sell the apparel of his children by piecemeal, whenever he could lay his hand upon any portion of it. When he was not so drunk as to afford his wife a fair prospect of success, in a direct personal encounter, she would sometimes try her skill at long shot. While he has been sitting, partially tipsy, within the cottage, she has been seen with her apron full of stones, on the outside, taking deliberate aim through the window-glass at her lord and master, and not unfrequently with the fatal precision of a skilful engineer. In the mean time, their poor children were growing up in a full knowledge of much, which they ought not to have known, and in utter ignorance of those matters, of which the children of worthy parents, at a similar age, are commonly informed. The degradation of Ethan and his wife ap-

peared to be complete ; their chief employment seemed to be the infliction of all possible annoyance upon each other ; their appearance had become squalid and miserable ; their children were the most wretched and ragged little group in the village. They lived literally from hand to mouth. Elkanah labored industriously. He was now rather more than sixteen years of age, and he cultivated a portion of the land about the cottage. The neighbors were kind to him ; and, notwithstanding her wild and ferocious behavior, Kitty Grafton was still an object of pity and regard with many of our villagers. There was a farmer, whose name was Jason Lambert. He had been one of Kitty Jansen's lovers, but had long been married, and the father of several interesting children. If happiness ever found a resting-place on earth, it was by the fireside of this pious family. Jason's wife, upon the suggestion of her compassionate husband, was charitable, in many ways, to Kitty Grafton and her children. They had other friends. Elkanah was constant at meeting. The Grafton pew had been

sold on execution ; and, after that event, Elkanah took his seat upon the forms assigned to the town's poor. I told him, after meeting," said my old master, "that he should always be welcome to a seat in our pew. He was very well dressed on the Sabbath, and I was somewhat surprised at the goodness of his apparel. It was explained to me afterward : The market woman, who used to dispose of Kitty's flowers and such other trifles as she had to sell, had lost her only son, who was about Elkanah's age ; and, moved by compassion for this poor youth, she had made him a present of the Sunday suit, which her own child had worn. Elkanah was obliged, when he took them off, on Sabbath evening, to conceal them from his father, who would certainly have sold them for rum, had they fallen in his way.

"Time, at length, produced a change, in the affairs of this miserable family ; and, if it came too late to enable Kitty Grafton to recover from her degradation, and to take a new departure for the voyage of life, it was certainly pro-

ductive of some important results. Ethan had been employed, by some charitable neighbor, to take his grist to mill. On his way he contrived to get miserably drunk ; and, on his return, fell from his horse head foremost upon the frozen ground, and broke his neck. When the news was brought to Kitty, that Ethan was dead, ‘ The Lord is merciful at last,’ she cried, ‘ and, if Ethan Grafton had not made me a beggar, I’d gladly give you a trifle for the good news. The devil has got his own, and upon his own terms too.’—The wretched condition of the family made it absolutely necessary, that Ethan Grafton’s remains should be buried from the poor-house. Some of the neighbors endeavored to persuade Kitty to look upon him once more, before he was committed to the ground. But she resolutely refused. ‘ I’ll not pretend to mourn,’ said she, ‘ when I rejoice ; and you’d, every one of you, be as happy as I am, to have such a mill-stone cut away from your necks. To be sure I’d rather look upon him dead than living, but I desire to do neither. He’s run

his drunken race—It's God's will, and I'll be the last to gainsay it.'—The funeral took place upon the following day; and it was sufficiently unceremonious, to quadrate with the notions of those, who are the most averse to pomp and pageantry. At one o'clock, in the afternoon, Purley Pulsifer, the sexton, arrived at the poor-house with his hearse, drawn by a lame Canadian pony. I went thither, and made the prayer, which was interrupted, now and then, by the sobbing of some person present.—At the conclusion, I looked round the room—It was Elkanah. Some kind person had furnished a piece of crape for his hat; and, when the coffin had been lifted upon the hearse, Purley Pulsifer took the horse by the bridle, and Elkanah, not only the chief, but the only mourner, followed behind. I stepped after him," said my old master, "and, taking this interesting boy by the hand, walked with him to the grave. The body was speedily committed to the ground. Purley, who was an active young man, stripped off his coat, and consumed not more than five minutes in filling

up the grave. Familiarity certainly begets indifference, if it do not breed contempt. Purley Pulsifer closed the gate of the graveyard and mounted his hearse; and, in less than five minutes, he was trotting his little, lame Canadian, at the top of his speed, against Boogley the butcher's sorrel colt over Heathermead common, hearse and all.—I gave Elkanah a few words of parting counsel, and requested him to visit me, on the following evening, at the parsonage.

“He came, at the time appointed, and I received him in my study. I inquired after the family, and he informed me, that his mother had not said a word, in relation to his father's death, since the funeral; and that she scarcely opened her mouth to speak on any subject, unless some one of the children spoke to her first.—I asked him, if he had thought of any plans for the future; and, I confess, I was pleased and surprised, at the good sense and forecast of this poor lad, who had been reared in a den of misery—the trembling slave of a drunken father—and who had been favored with no other advantages, than such as he

had received from his aged grandparents. He told me, that he had often thought of my counsel to him, and that he had tried to do all he could for his mother and the other children, though it was very little. He said that he was then nearly seventeen, and that he had often thought he could do something better for them; and himself too, if he went elsewhere to seek his fortune; and that he was sure he should be a great deal happier any where than at home, where every thing brought so many distressing recollections to his mind. The pressure of a peculiar affliction, upon the nervous system of this boy, had become already alarming. How much longer the same cause might have continued to operate, without producing madness or idiocy, it would be no easy matter to determine. He admitted, in answer to some inquiries of mine, that, for years, his sleep had always been disturbed by the fear of his father's anger; and that he had often leaped from his bed, while dreaming that his father was pursuing him, and filled the house with his cries, until his mother had

come to awaken him from these distressing slumbers. He told me, that when he was walking in the road, or in the field, or working in the garden, he found himself occasionally affected with violent agitation ; and that, at such times, he was apt to start and look around him, in terror. He stated, that, although he knew his father was dead, and had seen him buried in the earth, he still retained a vague and unaccountable dread of him ; and that this condition of mind had kept him from sleeping, during the greater part of the preceding night.

“ I asked him, if he had spoken to his mother upon the subject of leaving home, and ascertained that he had. She had told him he might do as he pleased, and did not even inquire into his plans, in such event. Her state of mind was evidently deplorable. Her care for her children seemed now of no higher order than the solicitude, which a hyena may be supposed to feel for her whelps. She willingly attended to their cries of hunger, and procured their food, while they were unable to

obtain it for themselves ; and, with the same instinctive principle for her prompter, which impels the beast of the field, she gathered them into their lairs, and watched over their safety, and kindled into fury, upon the approach of an assailant. She appeared to care not, if they were reared in utter ignorance, and their religious welfare was the least of her concerns. — Her mind seemed not to have lost its energy, when roused into action ; but her hopes had been confined to the present world, and these hopes had been effectually blasted. The gentle yet irresistible springs of poor Kitty's heart had lost their temper ; those fires, which, for years, had burnt so fiercely there, had deprived them of their elasticity. Her mind therefore remained inactive, unmoved by all other impulses than those, which were purely instinctive.

“It was decided, that Elkanah should follow the bias of his own mind, in which there appeared to be so much less of waywardness or will than of rational calculation. Elkanah's travelling equipage was superlatively simple :

a small bundle, supported upon his shoulder, on the end of an oaken stick, that had belonged to old Gotlieb Jansen, comprised his whole earthly possessions, real, personal, and mixed. The poor fellow had suffered most, for the want of a pair of shoes; on the day before his departure, I happened to be at Job Rawlins's shop, when Elkanah came in, to beg a few ends and the loan of an awl to repair his old ones. Rawlins was thought to be a crabbed fellow, and I had prepared myself to hear a surly reply, possibly a refusal.—‘Well, Elky,’ said he, as he eyed the boy over his spectacles, ‘you’re a going to seek your fortin, I hear.’—‘Yes, sir,’ replied Elkanah, ‘I’m going to try to do something.’—‘Well, boy,’ rejoined the shoemaker, ‘I guess you’ll succeed; you’ve had a bad sample o’ life to begin with. Let’s see your shoes—Pshaw, them aren’t wuth mending; the upper leather’s all rotten; you couldn’t walk ten miles in these old brogues.’ Rawlins rummaged over his drawers, and taking out a stout pair, told Elkanah to try them on; they fitted him exactly. ‘There.’

said he, 'how do they feel?'—'They seem very easy, sir,' replied the boy, as he was proceeding to take them off; 'I've no money to buy a new pair, and, if you'll be so good as to let me have two or three ends, I'll'—'Pshaw!' cried Rawlins, 'put 'em on agin, I tell ye. I know you haven't got no money, Elky; if you ever get rich, and come back here, why, you may pay me for 'em; they're six and eight pence; and if you have a hard run, I shan't think nothing on't, if you never pay for the shoes.'—I was so pleased with Rawlins, that I ordered a new pair of whole boots, though I did not really need them; and told him Mrs. More would step in the next day to be measured for a pair of pattens.

"The next morning, at an early hour, Elkanah turned his back upon the cottage at Heathermead End. He wept over his little sister and his brethren, and they mingled their tears with his. His mother shed not a tear. And when he kissed her cheek, and bade her farewell, she only replied, 'I shall wish you dead, Elkanah, if you ever become a drunkard.'

“The lad stopped at my house, to take leave of me. Mrs. More insisted on putting a few crackers into his bundle; and, after he had gone, she told me, that he had not forgotten the Bible which his grandfather had given him—she had seen it carefully deposited in his little pack. He took leave of me with evident emotion, and I gave him my blessing.

“A few days after Elkanah’s departure, I made a visit to the cottage. I came upon its inmates by surprise. I found Kitty sitting alone, in the very apartment, in which, while old Gotlieb was living, I had enjoyed so many hours of rational happiness. It was now miserably furnished, and without a vestige of that air of comfort, for which it had once been remarkable. Gotlieb’s arm-chair still remained in this apartment, and in it, as I entered, sat his ill-fated daughter, with her arms folded, and her eyes bent unmeaningly upon the floor. She appeared to me then decidedly the most forlorn and miserable object, in human form, that I had ever beheld. She did not even ask me to take a seat, which she had never omitted

before. I endeavored to draw her into conversation, but my attempts were fruitless. Short answers to my direct inquiries were all I could obtain. I asked after the children; she seemed not to know where they were. I soon after saw them playing near a pond, in rear of the cottage. I inquired of her, if she did not feel an interest in their welfare: she made no direct reply, but, without raising her eyes from the floor, and shrugging up her shoulders as she spoke, she said in an under tone—‘They’ll all be drunkards like enough.’—I strove to rouse her from this condition of apathy, by pointing out to her a mother’s accountability, for her faithful stewardship over the children that God has given her; but I might as profitably have preached homilies to the woods and rocks. Many succeeding visits were attended with the same results. Nevertheless, she gave no evidence, by her outward conduct, of insanity. After the removal of the grand exciting cause, I am inclined to believe there were no striking exhibitions of violent temper.

She appeared to be attentive to the wants of her children, in regard to their food and clothing. The neighbors were kind; and, with their assistance, she supplied the simple demands of nature, and still continued to patch up their apparel, such as it was. She never mentioned Elkanah, and whenever I spoke encouragingly of the poor boy, she invariably gave me the same laconic and ominous reply—‘He’ll be a drunkard.’—I made an application to the overseers of the poor, to ascertain, if this family might not with propriety be received into the poor-house; believing, as I did with good reason, that the children would have a better opportunity for acquiring a little useful knowledge. There was an objection, in the fact, that Kitty had her right of dower, in all that still remained of the homestead; and could not therefore be considered a pauper, without visible means of support. She was no vagrant, for she never stirred from home. Clearly, without her consent, it seemed not easy to effectuate our good wishes, on her

behalf. Accordingly, I sought a convenient opportunity, and, with all imaginable caution, suggested the propriety of such a measure. This was the only occasion, since Ethan's death, upon which I ever witnessed any violent excitement of her temper; and my well-meant endeavor cost me the entire loss of her confidence, which I have never been able to regain. Whenever I approach her, she turns her back upon me, as she did this morning, with an expression of distrust and aversion. When I mentioned the poor-house, upon the occasion to which I have alluded, though she had remained entirely unmoved, till that moment, she started suddenly, and sprang from her seat—'Gotlieb Jansen's daughter in the poor-house!' said she, with a strong and passionate utterance, and, instantly quitting the apartment, flung to the door with violence, and left me alone.—I never was able to reinstate myself in the good graces of Kitty Grafton.

"More than six months had elapsed, since Elkanah left the village, when, upon my

application at the post-office one morning, a double letter was put into my hand, with the New York post-mark. It was from Elkanah Grafton. This letter was tolerably well written, and very well expressed. It contained twenty dollars, and the postage had been paid. Elkanah informed me, that, with the exception of a short illness, he had enjoyed excellent health, and that God had prospered his humble exertions beyond his hopes. He stated, that, after his arrival in New York, he soon obtained a good situation, as a porter in a store, for which, as he was quite stout for his years, he had found himself well qualified. In that station, he had very soon, by untiring industry, acquired the means of purchasing a hand-cart, for which he had found constant and profitable occupation; and, that he had laid by an amount nearly sufficient to pay for a horse and dray. With these, if God should continue his good health, he thought he should be able to do a very profitable business, as he had already, by his strict attention, acquired

the good will of the merchant, whom he had served in the capacity of porter, and who promised to find him constant employment. He regretted, that he could not conveniently send a larger sum, for his mother and the children. He hoped, if the Lord prospered him, to do much more for them all, and that the children would not grow up in entire ignorance. He informed me, that an obliging young man, a clerk in the store, where he first obtained employment, had taught him to write, in his intervals of leisure. He requested me to pay Mr. Rawlins for the shoes, and tell him, they had done him good service, and to apply the residue of the twenty dollars, for the benefit of the family. He concluded, by telling me, that, upon the first night, after he quitted Heathermead, he slept more soundly than he had done for years; and that he closed his eyes the more happily, because I had assured him, I would certainly pray God to protect and prosper him.

“I was so much delighted with the recep-

tion of this letter, that I went over immediately to the shoemaker's shop. Rawlins was sitting upon his bench, with his lap-stone on his knees, hammering a piece of sole leather. I took my seat upon an unoccupied bench directly before him. Holding the letter in one hand, and the twenty dollars in the other—'It's from Elkanah Grafton, Mr. Rawlins,' said I.—'Why, how you talk! Parson More,' cried the shoemaker, as he set down his lap-stone on the floor, and, resting his cheek upon his hand, looked at me earnestly over his glasses, as I commenced reading the letter.—'There,' said he, when I had finished, 'don't you remember, parson, I told him he'd get along?'—'Yes,' I replied, 'I think I do—now, Mr. Rawlins, if you'll change the bill, I'll pay you for the shoes.'—'Pshaw, Parson More, I meant to give Elky them are shoes, and I set it down as lent to the Lord; 'twas a part o' what I calculated to give away this year. I can't take no pay for them shoes no way.'—I was about to press the matter, when he cried, as he caught

up the lap-stone—‘Pshaw, Parson More, I can’t, no how,’ and began to hammer the sole leather with all his might, while he struck up ‘Life is the time,’ with a voice, that defied all further expostulation.

“I proceeded immediately to Heathermead End. Being thoroughly aware of Kitty’s aversion to my visits, I knocked once only at the cottage door, that I might secure an interview, opening it almost at the same moment, and holding the letter in my hand. She was in the apartment, and we stood, for an instant, in full view of each other. I scarcely opened my mouth to communicate the tidings, when she clapped her hands upon her ears, and strode off towards the fields, saying as she went, ‘I’ll hear nothing about the poor-house.’—I watched her for a few moments, till she had reached the confines of the neighboring wood lot. I was satisfied, that our direct communications were at an end; and sincerely regretted, that I had limited my power of usefulness, by approaching a subject so exceedingly offensive to her pride. I had

lost her confidence, and had no course left, but to open some other channel of communication. The nearest neighbors were the family of Ashur Mellen: they had never been particularly blessed in their basket and store—they were poor, but pious, industrious, and eminently cheerful. Of their pittance they were ready to impart to those, whose necessities were greater than their own. This family had been unvaryingly kind to Kitty Grafton and her children. Ashur's only daughter was, at this time, eighteen years of age. Her affectionate temper had led her frequently to Kitty's cottage; she had often taken her seat by the poor creature's side, and, in some slight measure, broken in upon her desperate state of mind, by playing with the children. At one time, she would give them some little instruction in their reading and spelling; and, at another, she would rally the mother's energies, by taking their ragged clothes into her own hands, and proceeding to repair them. I confided Elkanah's letter and the money to the care of Ashur

Mellen, whose integrity was a proverb in our village. He told me, a few days after, that his daughter had read the letter to Kitty Grafton, who uttered nothing at the close, but her customary prophecy, whenever the name of Elkanah was mentioned ;—‘ He’ll die a drunkard yet.’ Farmer Mellen informed me, that Kitty would not receive the money, nor give any direction how it should be employed ; and that his daughter had therefore taken the charge upon herself of laying it out to the best advantage. ‘ You’ve seen,’ said Ashur Mellen, ‘ how our Rhoda flies round with her rake in haying time, jest afore a thunder shower,—why, Mr. More,’ said he, ‘ she’s equal to any two hired men ;—well, she’s jest as busy now about fixing these here children. She’s been at it, from morning to night, ever since you was t’our house. ’ Zeik Atherton, that’s been a kind o’ courting Rhoda, you know, says, arter what he’s seed for the last three days, he’ll trust her with anybody’s children.’—I well recollect the delight I felt, on the following Sabbath, after

I had been seated, for a short time, in my pulpit, when I saw Rhoda Mellen, with an air of justifiable pride and pleasure, leading Kitty Grafton's four children, tidily apparelled, into God's holy temple. I took special care to notice them after the service; and, in a voice, sufficiently distinct to be heard by more than one, I commended Rhoda for her zeal for these orphans—and such in reality they were. I never was given to making matches," continued my old master, "but I wished Rhoda Mellen a good husband, with all my heart, and I was particularly careful to bestow this commendation upon the poor girl, in the hearing of Ezekiel Atherton, who, though he had not yet offered himself, was paying her considerable attention. Atherton was a worthy young man, and owned a farm, a small one to be sure, but it was unencumbered. He was evidently gratified, quite as sincerely as Rhoda herself, by my approbation, and seemed to catch no small portion of her enthusiasm. His horse and wagon were speedily at the church

door; Rhoda could not decently refuse his invitation; though, as she caught a glance at the groups, who were tittering and simpering on the church steps, in the best good nature withal, she blushed to the very roots of her fine black hair. Kitty's four children were also accommodated in the wagon, and Ezekiel Atherton, as he drove off, with his shining face, gave a familiar nod, and a happy smile to his waggish companions, who complimented him upon his growing family. Ashur Mellen called on me the next morning, before breakfast, a full week, before I could possibly comply with his request, to ask me to publish the bans of marriage between Ezekiel Atherton and his daughter Rhoda.

“Rhoda Mellen's anticipations of brighter days to come abated not the tithe of a hair of her interest in these poor children. Her attentions to them and their wretched mother seemed rather to be multiplied.

“I acknowledged the receipt of Elkanah's letter, directing, as he had requested, to the

care of A. I. McFinnison and Co., informing him in what manner the money had been employed, and furnishing such information as I thought proper. His letters and supplies of money continued to reach me for the space of two years, with intermissions of three or four months. From their general tenor I was led to believe, that he was growing in favor with God and man. While he described his prosperity, as transcending his utmost expectations, he appeared—and his language could not have been mistaken—to feel the same humble accountability to God, that an unexceptionable steward ought to feel to a master, from whom he has received all that he enjoys. He had made valuable friends; and he appeared to be in no danger of losing them. The master, whom he had first served in the city, having found him faithful over a few things, had made him steward over many. The same individual, a clerk in the store, who had taught him to write, had instructed him also in arithmetic and book-keeping. His em-

ployer had not failed to perceive, that, in addition to his religious and moral qualifications, his industry, activity, and intelligence, and highly acceptable manners, fitted him for a more elevated walk. At the expiration of fourteen months, he disposed of his horse and dray, and was received into the counting room, as a clerk. The business of the firm had led them to cultivate extensive connections with the western country. Two years had scarcely elapsed, since Elkanah Grafton departed from the village,—the penniless descendant of a drunken father,—before his commercial friends thought him so far worthy of their confidence, as to employ him at a distance, and to give him such a credit as to enable him to commence business on his own account. He advised me of this good fortune. Seven months elapsed, after the reception of this letter, before another reached me from New Orleans. His accounts were still exceedingly flattering, in regard to his success; but they were so justly expressed, and so admirably well tempered with a firm

reliance upon God,—with such a Christian submission to his will,—with such a humble willingness, whether he giveth or taketh away, to bless his holy name,—that I truly believe, had this young man been suddenly reduced to penury again, he would have borne the cross like a veteran soldier. Such, however, seemed not as yet to be the destiny of Heaven. I had nearly forgotten to state, that, after I had informed him of Rhoda Mellen's great kindness to his mother and the children, he frequently requested me to employ a part of his remittances for their benefit.—Rawlins was growing old; his eyesight began to fail him; and he could scarcely express the satisfaction he enjoyed, when I presented him with a large Family Bible, which I had been requested by Elkanah, as he was about leaving New York for the western country, to purchase on his account. 'Why, pshaw, Mr. More, I want to know,' said he, as he stared at the binding; 'this here's slick enough. What a raal good type 'tis,' he continued, as

he opened at the first chapter of Genesis.—
‘That are **I** is full as long as my pegging awl
—and there, Mr. More, only look at that are
capital **G** ; its every bit and grain as big as a
young woman’s heel-tap. Well, for sartain, its
the polite thing in Elky to send me sich a grand
present. I wonder how he’s off, for shoes,
Mr. More ; though, as like as not, he would’nt
wear such as I make, now he’s getting on so
fine. My old hand hasn’t lost its cunning,
for all that ; look a here, Mr. More,’ said he,
taking down a pair of military boots, which
he had just completed for Colonel Pepper-
grass, ‘what d’ye say to them ?’—I told him I
thought his work as respectable as any body’s.
—‘ Pshaw, Mr. More !’ said he, ‘ when you
write, you’ll please to give my best benevo-
lence to Elky, and thank him peticular.’

“ After Rhoda Mellen was married, though
the distance was materially increased, be-
tween her residence and the Grafton cottage,
she still contrived to see the children fre-
quently, and took them with her to meeting
almost every Sabbath.

“ Years rolled away, and no visible change occurred in regard to Kitty Grafton. She rose up and lay down with her accustomed regularity. She prepared the simple meals for herself and her children; and gave some attention to their clothing. When not thus engaged, her mind appeared to settle into that state of bitter despondency, which I have already described.

“ I was sitting, one evening, in this very chair, and looking out of that window—it was nearly sunset—Mrs. More and myself had been remarking, a short time before, upon the very rapid passage of those five years, which had gone by, since Elkanah left the village. The mail stage stopped at the door; and a well-dressed young man alighted and advanced towards it.—It was Elkanah Grafton—I met him in the entry—he embraced me with the affection of a child, and I wept over him like a father.—After a brief conversation between him and Mrs. More, respecting his mother and the children, he expressed a wish to visit the cottage. We proceeded

together. I informed him, by the way, of the circumstance, which had lost me his mother's confidence, and he disclosed to me his plans, respecting his younger brothers and his sister. He told me, that the Lord had placed the means abundantly in his power, for doing good, and that he felt accountable for their employment. When we arrived at the cottage, the children were playing before the door. The elder instantly recognized his brother, and exclaimed, as he ran into the house, 'Mother, Elkanah has come!'—Kitty came forth with a degree of earnestness, in her look and manner, which surprised me. There was a faint smile upon her features, and her lips trembled with emotion. 'Elkanah!' said she;—but as he approached her, she observed me, for the first time, and clapping her hands upon her ears, she returned to the house, exclaiming, as upon a former occasion, 'I'll hear nothing of the poor-house.'

"Elkanah followed her into the house, and I told the children to inform him, that I had

returned to the parsonage, and should expect him there.

“It was late in the evening, before he came. His spirits were evidently depressed by the scene he had witnessed. He informed me, that, when he had followed his mother into the cottage, there was no longer the slightest evidence of emotion ; that his efforts to rouse her from her apathy were utterly ineffectual ; and that she had scarcely appeared to listen to his propositions for her advantage. When he suggested a removal from the cottage to a more comfortable residence, she shook her head with a slight expression of anger ; and, after a short pause, exclaimed, ‘Here I was born, and here I will die.’—In answer to his request for permission to remove the children for the purposes of education, she said, ‘Very well—they’ll all be drunkards.’

“Elkanah Grafton remained a fortnight in the village. It would be superfluous to say, that he visited his old friend Rawlins, and took tea three or four times with Ezekiel

Atherton and his wife. Elkanah gathered his most important lessons from an infallible teacher; and I have never known an individual more oblivious of injuries or more tenacious of the recollection of benefits than he.

“There are many interesting circumstances, connected with this narrative, which I cannot relate, without an extension of the story to an unwarrantable length. The residue may easily be told, in a summary manner.—Many years have passed away, since those days of domestic desolation, when poor Elkanah was a broken-spirited slave, in the cottage of his drunken father. He yet lives, opulent, respected, and beloved—the benefactor of his fellow men. He took upon himself the education of his three brothers and his sister. The latter is now the wife of a respectable professional gentleman in —————. One of his brothers became a merchant, and is a man of wealth. The other two, at Elkanah’s charge, received a liberal education.

Of these one prepared for the ministry, but has been called, I trust, to a better world.

“In the Mahometan empire, refreshing fountains are often presented to the view of the traveller by the side of the public way. Of these many are pious foundations. Trees are planted around them. Here the pious Mussulman throws off his mantle ; spreads it for a carpet on the ground ; and with his prayers, unites his expressions of gratitude to that benefactor, to whom he is indebted for the waters of the fountain, for shade, and for repose.—In a distant corner of our country there is a fountain of learning and piety, whose streams have already gone forth to refresh and irrigate the world. For centuries to come, the Christian disciple, in a higher and a holier spirit, while he partakes of its living waters, shall mingle with his thanksgiving to the Most High God his grateful recollections of its founder—that wandering boy, who, having no earthly father to comfort and to guide, became a child of God—a

steward of the poor—a benefactor of mankind.—Such was Elkanah Grafton.

“Having long since despaired of my best efforts, when directly employed upon that miserable woman, whom we saw this morning,—I have sometimes induced other persons to convey to her the tidings of God’s kind and merciful dealings with her children. She has but one commentary on such occasions—‘They’ll all be drunkards.’—Every thing is done to render her situation comfortable. Efforts were made, by her son’s directions, to repair the cottage, and put the estate in better order ; but she expressed so much displeasure, and even anger, that I ordered the workmen to desist. She told them, if they repaired it, her children, when they became drunkards, would certainly tear it to pieces. She is *desperate*, as I told you before. This word is often used in a violent sense ; I do not so intend it. She is without hope, and, of course, without happiness.—It was once far otherwise—she and her husband were

among the happiest of that class of my parishioners, whose happiness was vested in mere earthly joys and possessions ; and I truly believe, that, such as it was, that happiness might have continued, unimpaired, to the present hour—if *Ethan Grafton's cider had not been equal to wine.*"

